

D I A L O G U E S

A N D

L E T T E R S,

O N

M O R A L I T Y, Œ C O N O M Y,

A N D

P O L I T E N E S S,

F O R T H E

IMPROVEMENT and ENTERTAINMENT
of YOUNG FEMALE MINDS.

V O L. II.

By the AUTHOR of DIALOGUES on the FIRST
PRINCIPLES of RELIGION.

L O N D O N,

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Dialogues, Letters, &c.

L E T T E R XXVI.

MISS SEAMORE to Mrs. BARTLATE.

HONORED MADAM,

IT is so long since I received your last kind letter, that I am almost ashamed of writing to you ; but as the longer I stay before I begin, will only make my neglect appear still worse, I think I had better set about it directly, and trust to your good-nature to forgive my silence ; which I dare say you will do, when you hear the cause of it. Pray, Ma'am, do you remember a poor woman who used to work in the garden, and pull up the weeds, and gather the strawberries last summer ? Her name is *Mary Grey* ; and her husband was a ploughman, and worked very hard, and is a very good man, though extremely poor. About a twelvemonth ago she lay-in of two boys ; but as she could not afford to keep any maids, she was obliged to nurse, wash, and work, and do every thing for them herself : so she had not

time to do much besides ; only now and then after they were gone to sleep, she worked a little in our garden ; and my mamma used to pay her, but I don't know exactly how much. Her childrens names are *John* and *James*, and for all she had so much to do, and so little time to attend to them, you cannot think how nice they always looked, and were as neat, and tidy as could be, and so was the poor woman too. She used often to come to know if there were any jobs she could do ; and my mamma was always glad to employ her whenever she could, because she was so honest, civil, and industrious. About three months ago she mended the carpet which lays in our working and reading room, and we heard no more of her till a fortnight ago, when one day my mamma and I took a walk to enquire after her. At the door we found her two little boys, as dirty as pigs, laying upon the ground, playing with the stones ; and a little girl not so big as my sister setting by them to watch them. My mamma asked if Mrs. *Grey* was at home ? Yes, said the girl, she is in doors. So we went in : and the room which used to look so *nice* and *clean*, was covered with *dirt*, and looked quite *untidy*. Poor Mrs. *Grey* was setting upon the side of her bed, as dirty as her children, with one of her hands bound up. As soon as my mamma spoke to her, and asked her how she

she

she did? she burst out a crying, and could not make any answer for some time; at last she said, O! Madam, I am quite ashamed you should come to see me in this nasty condition, but *indeed* it is not my fault; I have not been able to do a stitch of work for these three months, and myself and children are all in rags and dirt, and my house in the manner you see it; I am sure it is not fit for you to come into, Ma'am. My mamma then set down, and desired she would tell her what was the matter, and how she had hurt her hand. My poor hand, said she, is bad indeed, and I am afraid it will never be well. She then cried again. And I could not help crying too, and I felt *so sick* and *uncomfortable*, that I wished I had not gone to see her. My mamma then told her to try and compose herself, and gave her her smelling bottle, and fetched her some water in a cup to drink; and after that, she seemed better, and began to talk, and said: "O! Madam, I am *very* miserable indeed! I am almost starved to death! and my poor babes are so too! but I will tell you how it has happened. If you remember, Ma'am, about three months ago you was so kind as to let me have your carpet to mend, and doing that, I some how, or other, jobbed the great needle I did it with under my thumb nail, and very painful it was, but still it was not so bad but I could finish my work; and

" when

“ when I brought it home, you gave me half a crown : more I am sure than the work was worth, but you are always very kind. I did not chuse to mention having hurt my thumb to you, for I thought it would look as if I expected you should pay me more, and so I took no notice of it; and when I came home, I went to washing, and the next day I scowered my room, and I believe I got some sand into it; for when I had done, it was so bad I did not know how to bear it, and it swelled all the way to my shoulder, and I could not get a wink of sleep all night. So the next day my dear husband said I should go to the surgeon’s with it, and he walked with me to Mr. *Slasb*’s, who told me to poultice it, and the morning after he was obliged to lay it open all across my hand. This was a sad thing upon me, for as it was my right hand, I could neither work, or wash, or even nurse my little boys as I should do : but my husband was very kind to me, and as it was harvest time, he got pretty good wages, and I paid a neighbour for washing our clothes, and gave a girl three-pence a day to come and help me to take care of my boys. But my hand kept growing worse and worse, and I could get no rest night or day; ’till at last the pain of it, and want of sleep made me quite ill, and so weak, that I could not possibly walk to Mr. *Slasb*’s without help; so I used to

“ stay

“ stay ’till my husband came from work at night, and then by his helping me along, made shift to crawl there, and back again. And last *Thursday* month, in our return, as we were sitting upon the blue stile to rest, and my husband had just taken off the handkerchief he had round his neck to make a sling for my arm, because hanging down hurt it; a press-gang came by, and forced him to go along with them. For that moment I forgot my arm was sore, and throwing it about my husband’s neck, vowed he should not leave me. I remember he kissed me, and said, No, *Mary!* I will *die* sooner than I will leave you. But, Ma’am, what *could* he do against half a dozen great strong men who were resolved to have him? How they got him away, I know not: one of them with a great stick gave me a blow across my fore hand, as it held him round the neck, and the pain of it made me faint away, and when I came to myself I found he was *not* there.” When Mrs. Grey came to this part of her story, she cried again sadly; and so did my mamma; and so did I; nor can I help it even *now* whilst I am writing. I wish my letter was finished; but I have not yet told you half what she said, and I must not leave off in the middle, so I will go on with her sad tale. “ To describe, my good Madam, how I felt at *that* moment, when opening my

“ eyes

“ eyes, I found myself *alone* upon the ground *is impossible*. I thought my heart would have broke. I tried to call out for my *James*; but alas! poor *James* was too far off to hear. (Blessings attend him wherever he is!) I set for some time, hoping, that as I was already so ill, death would quickly come and put an end to my life and misery together. But when the thought of my poor boys come into my mind, instead of dying, I wished to be well enough to work for them and feed them, if it was only for their father’s sake. Unable as I had before been to walk without assistance, I now was obliged to drag my trembling limbs alone, without the kind helping hand of my husband. How I got along I know not; but God was very kind, and suffered nothing more to hurt me, ’till I reached my little home, the sight of which, together with hearing the cries of both my children, (for the girl to whose care I left them, was gone, and they were screaming alone) I thought would have made me mad. I endeavoured to lift them off the ground, but I had not strength for it, and the thought of their lost father made me almost desperate. I then went to my neighbour’s to seek for help, but nobody was in the way, and I was too much spent to go any farther to ask it; I therefore returned home, and shutting my door, threw myself upon the floor between them; they soon
“ crawled

“ crawled to me, and being tired with crying, both fell asleep, and in that state we continued all night. As soon as it was day light, I got off the ground, and with great difficulty again crept to my neighbour. She, poor woman, readily came to my assistance, and helped me into bed; for added to my other complaints, laying upon the floor had given me a most violent cold and rheumatism in all my bones, so that I was quite unable to set up. She likewise gave my boys some breakfast, and very kindly sent her little girl to help me; but she could not stay with me herself, as she has a large family, and works hard for their living. But she has been very good, and dressed my hand every day, and found out somebody to buy my gown, and every thing I could part with, and my poor husband's Sunday cloaths, and his watch, (for he had a silver one his grandmother gave him) and his buckles, and my own hat and cloak, and in short every thing but what you now see. And thus, Madam, am I reduced to this miserable state; and my poor children less able to stand now, than they could three months ago, for want of food and nursing. I am afraid, Ma'am, I have tired you with my long account; but I hope your goodness will excuse it, and my heart feels lighter for telling all its sorrows; for indeed sometimes I think it *will* break.

“ But

“ But God has supported me most wonderfully, for I could not have believed it *possible* for me to go through so much pain of body, and trouble of mind, without sinking under it; but he is *very kind*.” She then cried again, and my mamma tried to comfort her, and told her, as she had hitherto been supported, she need not fear, but that God would continue to take care of her. She then gave her some money, and told her she would send somebody to nurse her and the boys, and promised to call again in the afternoon. And so she did; but I did not like to go with her, neither have I been since the first time (because it made me so *unhappy*) though my mamma has been every day. But the reason I have not been able to write to you, Ma’am, sooner, is because I have been making some cloaths for poor little *John* and *James*. My mamma has bought them three new gowns a piece, and one of them I *cut* out quite by myself, and she says it is very tidily done, and we have made them some shifts and petticoats. And my mamma every day dresses *Mary Grey’s* hand, which is much better since she has had the care of it, and she hopes it will soon be well enough to use. But now having told you why I did not write to you before, I must leave off, for my hand aches so, that I can scarcely hold my
pen

pen, or shape my letters, therefore at present must beg leave to add no more, than that

I am, dear Madam,

Your very dutiful Niece,

HARRIOT SEAMORE.

L E T T E R XXVII.

Mrs. BARTLATE to Miss SEAMORE.

I HAD indeed began to wonder at the long silence of my dear *Harriot*; and having hitherto found her so very punctual a correspondent, I was almost alarmed lest she was prevented by illness: and greatly was I rejoiced by the receipt of her last long letter to find nothing of that sort had been the cause of it. Though a letter from you, my love, always affords me a very sincere pleasure, yet would I on no account wish so to restrain you, as to have you think it *necessary* to write to me, either when it is rendered inconvenient through business, or disagreeable upon account of calling you from more pleasing employments. A heart so thoroughly good-natured as I am well convinced your's to be, will always take delight in conferring happiness on every one around it; and

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once

once assured that your letters bestow no small degree of pleasure upon me, I am sure you will omit no convenient opportunity of sending them. Having said thus much to remove every degree of unnecessary restraint from your mind, I hasten to the subject of your letter, which, I promise you, greatly affected me; and when I came to that part where you describe (or rather indeed could *not* describe) *Mary Grey's* feelings, upon finding herself *alone* without her husband, I could no more refrain from tears, than you could when you visited her. The thought of the agony of mind she must at that moment endure, is sufficient to soften the hearts of the most obdurate: and none but those who are lost to every sense of humanity, can reflect upon the sufferings of their fellow creatures without partaking of their sorrows. And yet (degrading as the dreadful truth is to human nature) too many are there to be found in the world, who, so far from commiserating distress, take a brutal pleasure in creating and augmenting it. Such characters we cannot too much abhor; and whilst we, as by duty bound, pray for their forgiveness, we cannot at the same time but *execrate* their vices. You have so well related the melancholy account of poor *Mary's* distresses, that I could almost fancy I myself was eye-witness to her sorrows; and though I know not where the *blue stile* or her cottage are situated,

situated, yet my imagination immediately formed them; and I thought I beheld the very spot where her husband stood, when he took the handkerchief from his neck to support her arm. And when she recovered from her fainting fit, with not less exactness could I *think* I saw her looking round for her beloved *James*, and after finding it was in vain to call or wait for him, tottering home to her dwelling. Where, what a fresh scene of misery must present itself in her two helpless children, to whom she was unable to give assistance herself, nor could she procure any from others. What, my love, must her thoughts at that moment have been (well might she suppose that her *heart would break*,) when she reflected, that *she* had then no *husband*, *they* no *father* to provide for them. In short, my dear, the account you sent me, is a most melancholy one; nor do I at all wonder that you should feel *sick* and *uncomfortable* whilst you heard it; for could you have retained your natural vivacity, and set unmoved at such a tale of woe, you must, I think, have been intirely divested of every soft feeling of compassion: nor could I ever entertain a tolerable opinion of that heart which could carelessly listen to so disastrous a narrative. But, my love, though I wonder not at your feelings, I must confess I was a little surprised to find you *wish* you had not been to see her; and that you have not since ac-

accompanied your mamma in her daily visits. Now, though I don't in the least doubt this proceeds intirely from your tenderness; yet, I would wish you to reflect, my dear, upon the consequences it may lead to: for will not a desire of maintaining our own peace of mind, induce us to avoid every object of misery, lest the sight of the melancholy sufferer should disturb our serenity, and cast a gloom across our hearts? And by thus turning our eye from the afflicted, shall we not in a great measure forget to contribute to their relief? The consequence is unavoidable that we must. For how shall we relieve those afflictions with which we are unacquainted? And how shall we be made acquainted with them, unless we will give ourselves the trouble to *see* and *bear* them? We are all too apt to regard with indifference those sufferings in others, which we ourselves have never experienced: hence the cause why the distresses of the poor are so little regarded by the generality of the rich. Bred up in affluence themselves, with every want supplied, even before they are sensible of it; they have no idea of the innumerable distresses attending a state of penury. Never hungry themselves, they can form no notion of the gnawing pains of want. Warm and defended from the inclemency of the weather, they can ill fancy the pinching agony of severe cold, or the fainting heat of the scorching sun. Nor will the mere *telling* them

such

such miseries *do* indeed exist, have the same weight, or make half the impression upon their hearts, as if they had themselves *felt*, or even only *beheld* them. For those hearts must be deplorably hard indeed, who can bear to see their fellow creatures suffering afflictions in their power to relieve, and not stretch out the hand of charity towards them. And I doubt not but many of those people, who now scarce ever think of the calamities of others, would ardently try to mitigate them, if once they would but prevail upon themselves to be made thoroughly acquainted with, instead of concealing themselves from them. Never, therefore, my dear girl, let this *false* tenderness make you unwilling to visit those dismal abodes of suffering, where sorrow dwells in all its horrors, lest it should too much depress your spirits, or make you feel *uncomfortable*; for be assured, however you may flatter yourself to the contrary, such behaviour proceeds not so much from *real compassion* to the distressed, as from *self-love* and indulgence to your *own ease*. Your mamma, from her great tenderness of disposition, must, I am sure, have felt equal pain with yourself at poor Mrs. Grey's afflictions. Yet how much *nobler*, how much more *true* compassion has she shewn by daily visiting her, dressing her arm, and seeing her taken care of; than if for fear of herself feeling *uncomfortable* from such a dismal sight, she had refused to

go to her, and only sent her a little money. And believe me, my *Harriot*, however it may distress us for the time, nothing affords so much satisfaction in the retrospect, as the thought of having bestowed comfort upon those who were ready to perish. How amply must the pains and expence your mamma has been at be recompenced, by seeing a worthy woman by her care and charity restored to health and to her *family*: that *family* too, by her kindness saved perhaps from *ruin*; for had she not relieved them, they must either have been starved by cold and hunger, or else cast into a work-house; whereas the little care bestowed to cultivate either the bodies or minds of those unfortunate children whom they protect; makes it but too frequently become a nursery of vice, and the path to ruin. After every precaution, the human heart is too much inclined to evil, and it requires constant assiduity on our own parts, not to fall into those numerous snares, which on all sides sollicit us to sin. We cannot therefore be surpris'd at the crimes we daily see committed by those, whose minds have never been enlightened by education; and who from their parents have received no other instruction than their own bad example, which to them likewise came recommended by the same authority. It therefore always to me appears as a sure sign of *narrowness* of mind, to condemn with the same severity, every deviation

deviation from what is honorable and right in the poor and uninformed, as in those, whose happy education renders them indeed *inexcusable*: and though it may be necessary for the maintainance of good order in the state, that the *same* punishment should be inflicted on *every* transgressor of the laws of his country; yet, we may assure ourselves, that with that Almighty Being whose judgment can be no ways influenced by the *appearance* of things, but seeth every circumstance as it *really is*, it will be far otherwise. He will not expect to reap much where he has sown but sparingly, but “ *to whomsoever much has been given, from them will much be required.*” A text of scripture this, my love, which ought to be deeply engraved on every heart, that has been happy enough to receive instruction. Nor should they ever forget the subsequent part of it, which is even still more explicit, “ *That servant which knew his Lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.*” The justice of which proceeding must strike every person who will give themselves a moment’s time for reflection: for hard indeed would be the lot of poverty, if in this world it was burdened with every inconvenience, unlightened by any instruction, and at last expected to render the *same* account

count as those who have been blessed with every means of knowledge and improvement. That you, my dear girl, may make a proper use of those advantages you daily receive from the constant care and council of the tenderest of parents, and by your progress in goodness and learning at once shew your gratitude to the Almighty, and your love to them, is, I assure you, the ceaseless prayer of,

Your affectionate Aunt,

MARTHA BARTLATE.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

MISS SEAMORE to Mrs. BARTLATE.

HONORED MADAM,

I AM glad my last letter made you cry! It sounds very odd to say so too, but I mean that I am glad I wrote the account *well* enough to make you understand all about poor Mrs. Grey. I shewed my letter after I had finished it to my mamma, and she said I had written it very exact, and she did not believe that she could have repeated *Mary Grey's* words so well herself. I was glad she liked it, for you cannot think how much pleasure it gives me to be praised by my friends,
especially

especially by my papa and mamma, and my grand-
 mamma and you. Pray, Ma'am, do you know,
 that next *Monday* I am to go to my grand-
 mamma to stay for some time? I don't exactly
 know how long, but I fancy for about a fort-
 night. I like the thoughts of going very well,
 but I should still *better*, if it was not for leav-
 ing my friends at home. Notwithstanding all you
 say about its being *impossible* to live together, I
 cannot help wishing that we could do so, and
 I don't think I shall ever be perfectly happy 'till
 some how or other it is contrived for us to do
 so, and then I think I should be the happiest
 girl in the world, and not have one single thing
 besides to wish for. My mamma has again
 been so kind as to promise to write to me whilst
 I am absent, and I hope you will too, Ma'am,
 for I shall like vastly to have two correspondents
 at the same time. I have always forgot to tell
 you that my sister has got into joining-hand,
 and intends writing to you soon; and if Mr.
Quill will give her leave, she says, she will write
 to me whilst I am out. I hope she will! I was
 extremely glad to find by your last letter, that
 you was not displeased at my long silence; but
 indeed, my dear Ma'am, you need not have said so
 much, for fear I should write to you oftener than you
 like; for I assure you, when I cannot enjoy your
 company and conversation, there is no employment
 gives

gives me so much pleasure, and I shall always take every opportunity of writing to you that I possibly can; but you know that I have not much time for it, for my writing with Mr. *Quill*, and my drawing, music, dancing, reading, and working, do take up so long, that the day is almost gone before I have done: and then my mamma says, she insists upon my playing and using some exercise, so that altogether I have not much time for my dear aunt, not *half* so much as I could wish. I hear my mamma now enquiring after me to go with her to take a walk, and I have not near finished all I have to say: but as she wants me, I must go, so I think I had better send what I have written, and I will begin another letter as soon as I can, 'till when I remain,

Dear Madam,

Your dutiful Niece,

HARRIOT SEAMORE.

 L E T T E R XXIX.

Miss SEAMORE to Mrs. BARTLATE.

HONORED MADAM,

WHEN I left off writing to you yesterday, I went with my mamma to see poor Mrs. Grey. I have been two or three times since I received your letter, for to be sure what you say about going to see people in distress is very true; but yet it does make me so *very* uncomfortable you cannot think. I could eat no victuals all the rest of the day, nor think of any thing besides her troubles, and I waked twenty times in the night to think about her, and whilst I slept, dreamed about her husband and her fore hand all the time; and as being so unhappy myself, can do her no good, I don't see why some body else who don't mind it so much should not go instead, and then they might tell me all her distresses, and I would send her as much help as I possibly could, and then it would not signify to her, you know, whether I went myself or not. But I don't dislike going to see her now, because she is purely well, and her hand is so much better as to be able to use it a little, and she can sweep her room and dress her children herself, and they look so
clean

clean and neat again in the cloaths my mamma has given them, that they appear quite comfortable to what they did before; and she says, she should now be quite happy if she had but her husband with her; but the thoughts of not knowing where he is, or what hardships he may be suffering, makes her very uneasy, and keeps her mind in constant trouble. I am sure I don't wonder she should be so, for if any of my dear friends were to be so taken away from me, I don't know what I should do, I should not be able to *bear* it. My mamma, and sister, and I, are going this afternoon to drink tea at Mrs. *South's*, she is lately come into the new house that is built upon the common; she is a widow, and has three daughters about our age; but I am not acquainted with them yet: when I am, I will tell you what sort of girls they are. My papa intends to stay at home and play with *Tom*; they talk of being very busy, making boxes of some thin pieces of deal they have got. I am sure *Tom* will be well pleased with the employment, for he likes hammering dearly; I think he is but an ill judge of *sounds*, for he told me yesterday after I had been playing on the harpsichord, that he did not like the music I made half so well as what he made himself with a stick upon the watering pot. General *Dodsworth* came the other day whilst he was so employed, and when he enquired what he was doing? *Tom* answered,

“ I am

" I am drumming, Sir, to make your soldiers come together." The General was much pleased with his reply, and promised to bring him a drum the next time he comes; and he says he wishes he could persuade my papa to let him be a soldier; but neither my papa or mamma like he should; which I am very glad of, for I do not like he should go away to fight. I don't like *battles* and *war*, I think they are very wicked. Well! as sure as ever I begin to write to you, I am always interrupted, and now Mr. *Shade* is come, and not left me time to deliver you all the love and duties my papa, mamma, sister, and brother send you, and to assure you how much

I am,

Your dutiful Niece,

HARRIOT SEAMORE.

L E T T E R X X X .

Mrs. BARTLATE to Miss SEAMORE.

OF all states in life (next to having an accusing conscience) that of having time hang heavy upon one's hands, and not knowing in what manner to spend the day, must be the most dread-
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fully

fully tiresome. Indeed, unless incapacitated by illness, or some such necessary cause, I do not see how any one can waste any large portion of time, without affording sufficient ground for the admonitions of conscience; for doubtless, of all possessions, that of *time* is the most valuable; since it is the only space in which we can possibly secure to ourselves the blessings of eternity: and if we once suffer it to pass by unimproved, it will never more return to afford us a second opportunity of employing it to better advantage. I once knew a person possessed of every blessing almost this world can bestow, yet from a most unjustifiable indolence of disposition, rendered incapable of enjoying any. It is no less certain that some degree of exertion is necessary to give pleasure to repose, than that hunger is requisite to bestow on food its true relish; for as a full stomach must naturally loath the most luxurious dainties, so a person totally unoccupied, must by the same law of nature, grow weary of that rest, which, by being uninterrupted, causes only uneasiness instead of delight. From this cause Mrs. *Aelesi*, (for such was her name) though surrounded with every comfort, was always dissatisfied and uncomfortable, her circumstances were such as rendered working either for herself or family unnecessary. She was not fond of reading, had no taste for music, or drawing, and was ill qualified

to bear a conspicuous part in rational conversation. Her children were all put to school; and, excepting that he was fond of hunting, her husband was just such another inactive being as herself; for surrounded with every convenience (without their own exertion) themselves, they forgot the numerous necessities of their poorer brethren, which waited to be supplied by their assistance. But to look out for, and relieve objects of distress was an employment they never once thought of; hence the idea, that because in *want* of nothing, they had *nothing* to *do*, so filled their minds, that they passed their whole time in one continual state of *listless* inaction, *tired* with the daily repetition of the same dull scene, and *weary* of themselves and *life* from want of some other employment besides eating, sleeping, and gaping. From any danger of falling into this most detestable state, I am heartily glad to hear you are delivered by that constant round of *useful*, as well as entertaining employments in which you are daily engaged. Long, my dear girl, may this continue to be the case; and though I may frequently be a sufferer from your being obliged to curtail your entertaining epistles to me, still far rather had I relinquish my own gratifications, than that you should in any instance fail of at all times doing that which is most beneficial for yourself, as well as most advantageous to society. I rejoice to hear

you are going to pay your grand-mamma a visit, as I am sure it will afford her much pleasure. What a happy girl must you be, my *Harriot*, to have it in your power by your behaviour so much to encrease the happiness of all your friends; and what an encouragement it is for you to persevere in the same good course you have already begun. Indeed that heart, I think, must be far gone in wickedness, which can endure the thought of giving pain to those friends whose constant endeavour is to render that blessed. And yet alas! this is but too frequently the case with inconsiderate children, who far from trying to improve by the good advice given them by their parents, are foolish enough to be *angry* and *displeased* at it; and instead of esteeming themselves highly obliged by such anxious sollicitude for their welfare, consider it only as a troublesome restraint to their inclinations, and therefore take every opportunity they possibly can of counteracting and rendering useless all their admonitions and care. But like every other kind of sin, this is certain of becoming in time its own punishment: for when arrived to years of discretion, and they themselves have judgment sufficient to distinguish right from wrong; they then *severely* feel and regret the obstinate folly of their childhood, and wish, when it is too late, that they had been wise in time, and listened with better attention to the prudent advice

vice of those friends they before laughed at and disregarded : for as it is so extremely difficult, as to be almost *impossible* to break through long habits, they will hourly experience the effects of their former neglect, in the perpetual commission of some one or more absurd custom, which in their youth they would take no pains to conquer, as likewise the want of many little accomplishments they then neglected to acquire : whilst, added to all the rest, they will have that still severer aggravation to their misfortunes, to reflect, that by *their own* folly, they have not only lost many advantages they might have enjoyed, but also by their peevishness given much uneasiness to their parents, to whom they owed every satisfaction it was in their power to bestow, and to whose kindness they are indebted for every advantage they possess. But I need not stretch my letter, by dwelling so long on *this* subject when writing to my beloved *Harriot* ; who is already so fully sensible of those weighty obligations she lays under to her kind and indulgent parents, for all their care and attention towards her. Yes, my love, it is with the utmost pleasure I have frequently observed that implicit obedience you pay to all their commands, nor ever commit those things when absent from them, which you would blush to perform in their presence ; wisely considering, that as they love you dearly, they would never contradict

any of your own inclinations, was it not for your greater advantage. Thus, if at any time they reprove you for standing upon one foot, leaning upon your elbows, lolling your back against your chair, or any foolish trick you may be guilty of, instead of looking angry, and feeling displeased with their advice, you immediately do as desired, and in your heart acknowledge their watchful kindness, sensible that it was for *your* sake they troubled themselves to reprove you. In this manner had Mrs. *Crumpton* when a girl been wise enough to have acted, in all probability she would have been spared those mortifying circumstances she daily experiences upon account of her shape and size. Highly *ungenerous* it is, I will acknowledge, in any one, to deride another for mere personal deformity; but ungenerous as it is, the world in general are too much influenced by *out-ward* appearance, and the thoughtless and inconsiderate part of mankind, are mighty apt to approve or censure according as the sight is either pleased or disgusted. Hence Mrs. *Crumpton* seldom flirts abroad, but from the gay and uninformed, she hears the uncharitable titter, or the illiberal jest upon her deformed appearance. I was amazed one time to hear the numberless affronts she met with during the course of a short walk I once took with her. One person asking her why she did not carry her head in the middle of her body? and why she
looked

looked after one shoulder so much more than the other? Another advising her to carry her *bump* to market, and try how much she could sell it for. A third enquired if her fins were so many as to break her back? And a fourth, whether she lived in a nut-shell? In short, we scarcely passed a single boy, or person of the lower rank, but they had something or other (*witty* as they thought it) to say to her about her *person*; whilst even from those, by whose appearance one might justly expect more generosity, we frequently heard the rude whisper, or beheld the contemptuous sneer. Poor Mrs. *Crumpton* bore it all with a composure that served but to encrease compassion; and upon hearing one of the passengers say, "That woman had a fool of a mother, that forgot to make *Miss* hold up her head," she sighed, and said to me, "Indeed that man is mistaken, for my mother had a fool of a *daughter*, who would not mind what was said to her. Had I done that, I verily believe I should never have been crooked; but when I was a girl, I was silly enough to think myself as wise as my parents and friends; and if ever they told me to hold up my head, or stand upright, I always felt *affronted*, and though I was obliged to alter my position while they were with me, yet as soon as I was alone I always returned to my former manner of setting, or standing, and even perversely increased

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“ my fault, for the sake of shewing that I thought myself above improving from their *troublesome* advice. In this manner I foolishly and *wickedly* behaved, 'till it was out of my power to reform, and my shape was so terribly spoiled as to be past recovery. When therefore I find those mortifications which I constantly meet with, I cannot help thinking they are the just reward of my disobedience to my parents, to whom my behaviour must, I am sure, have given the greatest uneasiness; and often do I reflect with the severest remorse upon that period of my life, when blessed with the kindest of friends, I disregarded their advice, and by my conduct gave pain to those I was bound by every tie to please and obey.” In this manner did Mrs. *Crumpton* justly reflect upon her past conduct: and so doubtless must all those, who by their folly expose themselves to troubles and inconveniences they might have avoided, had they been wise enough to follow the council of their more prudent and experienced friends. But I fear you will question *my* prudence, by thus tiring you with so enormous a letter: but when I write to my dear *Harriot*, I never know when to conclude, though it is to assure 'her how sincerely

I am,

Her affectionate Aunt,

MARTHA BARTLATE.

L E T T E R XXXI.

Mrs. BARTLATE to Miss SEAMORE.

I DON'T know how it is, *Harriot*, but if ever I take up my pen to write to you, it runs on so fast, that I fear I shall quite tire you with the length of my epistles; every time I intend to correct this error, but your letters so insensibly lead me on from one subject to another, that I find I have filled a sheet, before I have spoken to one half of what required my notice. My last, I confess was stretched beyond all bounds, and therefore I omitted to touch upon a part of your letter, which I thought required some reply. I mean that passage where you again so ardently express your desire of having all your friends live together with you, as the only means to render you *perfectly* happy; which you think you never shall be, 'till by some method or other you are so united. I am much of your opinion, my love, and don't think you will ever experience *perfect happiness*, 'till you enjoy it in the society, not only of *your friends*, but that also of saints and angels: for *happiness*, my child, be assured, is a term adapted only to a state of *sinless perfection*, never to be experienced on this side Heaven: for could

we

we attain it upon earth, we should be apt to forget the design of our creation, and grow careless and indifferent in the performance of our duties. Full of evils as this world at present is, and afflicted as is most of its inhabitants, still we are all too much inclined to set our hearts and affections upon its vanities, and disregard that *better* state, which God has promised to all those who keep his commandments. For very wise and merciful reasons, therefore, it is, that the Almighty has absolutely forbidden *felicity* ever to be experienced upon earth. But at the same time that he has ordained this life as a state of *trial* to our virtues, and *preparation* for a better; he has graciously vouchsafed to grant us *many* blessings to comfort and delight us during our pilgrimage; and for these we should be most sincerely thankful, although they cannot afford us that *perfect happiness* we all wish to obtain: a *wish*, my dear, kindly implanted in our hearts by our great Creator, by way of constant incentive to the performance of our duties: for what can so powerfully persuade us to the undertaking of any difficult work, as the knowledge that our labors will be amply recompenced soon as we shall have accomplished it? So the certainty, that in Heaven we shall find all that perfect joy and felicity, which now we wish for, but *cannot* obtain, makes us perform our duties with alacrity, and support

port our troubles with patience, knowing that this world, and the things that belong to it, shall shortly have an end, but the joys that are in Heaven are *eternal*. And this consideration no doubt it is, that enables poor *Mary Grey* to support her troubles, and would, I trust, comfort you likewise, was you to be reduced to her situation. Nobody, *Harriot*, knows what they can do 'till put to the trial: 'tis therefore an *improper* manner of talking, to say, was you to meet with such an affliction, or lose any of your friends, you *could not bear it*. For was it to please God to call you to so severe a trial of your patience, how would you help yourself? or who could suffer your afflictions for you? Bear it therefore you *must*; and as murmuring and repining would not in the smallest degree abate your distresses, how much wiser, as well as more like a christian, would it be, patiently to submit to what God appointed, and wait his time to be delivered from your sorrows. Never, therefore, my love, permit yourself to talk, or even *think* in so wrong a manner; for depend upon it, God will not lay more upon you than he will give you strength to bear, provided you resign to him with patience, and *trust* in his mercy with confidence, Mrs. Grey, you know, told you, she never supposed she could have sustained such sufferings; but that God had been very kind, and supported her

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in a wonderful manner, far beyond what she could have expected. And so at all times we may assure ourselves, that if we are but careful to perform our own duties, God will not be backward in the fulfilling of his promises, but will at all times strengthen us in proportion to our trials. Convinced of this truth, you, I am sure, my dear, will no longer presume to say you *cannot* bear any thing he shall appoint; but by hourly endeavouring to do that which is righteous in his sight, will insure him at all times to be your *friend*, and a certain help in time of trouble.— I am glad to hear that the house upon the common is taken by a lady who has some little girls, I hope you will find them agreeable, and such as your mamma will approve of for your companions, for I think your neighbourhood seems a little deficient in play-fellows; though if I recollect, you have two or three, and I am sorry to say, that good children, in every respect fit for you to be intimate with, are very scarce. I would not however have you misunderstand me, or suppose that I think *my nieces* are the *only* good girls in the world; for though I acknowledge them to be *very very* good, still no doubt numbers may be found who are *as* perfect. All I mean is, that the *generality* of children, (though they may have as good hearts, yet) from want of proper care in their education are frequently guilty

guilty of little ugly illiberal tricks, and accustom themselves to many words and expressions which are easily learned, though very improper to be used, and such as I should be sorry to hear from your lips, or see practiced by you; and from hence arises the difficulty of finding *proper* companions for you. I rejoice as much as you can, that your papa and mamma differ in opinion from General *Dodsworth*, and propose some other plan of life than the army for your brother, for I confess my selfishness to be so great, that I should grieve to have him leave me, though in defence of his country, unless that country was in absolute danger of being lost without *his* assistance, and then indeed, I would willingly sacrifice my own feelings for the sake of the public good. How far *war* in general may be justifiable, I cannot pretend to determine. Certain it is, peace is an inestimable *blessing*; consequently, whoever unnecessarily disturbs that, must be guilty of a notorious sin. But that upon some occasions it *may* become necessary in order to *maintain* public happiness, I will not take upon me to deny: For though it is the duty of each *individual*, to overlook, and not to revenge the injuries done to *himself*; still, I do not apprehend that a *nation* is required to remain inactive, and permit its enemies to come either to destroy or enslave it. In such case, in defence of our *religion*, our *lives*,

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our

our *rights*, and our *friends*, I think the sword may lawfully be drawn; though *wars* and *battles* I no more love than you do, or than your little friend *Dick Stanhope*, who last week sent the inclosed copy of verses to *Henry Clayton*, on his persisting in his resolution to go into the army, and laughing at *Dick* for his pacific disposition. The *poetical* merit of them, I confess, is but little; their beauty consists in the good-humoured pleasantry which runs throughout the composition, so highly characteristic of their little merry Author.

WHY, in truth, my dear Henry, e'en say what you will,
 I own that to fight, I've nor courage, nor skill;
 Vastly pretty it seems in your high sounding verse,
 The fame of your heroes with praise to rehearse;
 And you may rejoice with prodigious delight,
 To think of their vict'ries, their conquests, and might.
 But after all, Henry, the truth to declare,
 I have not a wish in such glories to share.
 Much comfort it was, when poor Wolf tumbled down,
 That they pluck'd a few laurels to stick on his crown;
 And when Hector danc'd after Achilles's car,
 It was joyful to think he once conquer'd in war.
 You imagine it glorious a knock to provoke,
 But I find no enjoyment in feeling the stroke.
 When I hear of such quarts, and such gallons of blood,
 That run on the ground, and pour out like a flood,
 I declare

*I declare I could set down for pity and weep,
 To think human creatures should suffer like sheep;
 To think all the pains that their mothers have taken,
 Should meet the same end as a vile piece of bacon;
 That here arms and legs should be toss'd to the dogs,
 Or heads from their bodies be sever'd like hogs:
 There a skull without mercy be cloven in two,
 And the jaws all divided, stand horrid to view.
 Only think what a terrible sight it must be,
 Men, like oxen in shambles, extended to see;
 The joints all dispersed as they happen to fly,
 In mingled confusion all bloodily lie.*

*I declare, I no longer in fancy can bear,
 Such a scene of sad carnage and horror to share.
 And will you, my Henry, for glory and fame,
 For the sake of a hero's ridiculous name,
 Will you join the rest of the butchers that go
 To spread desolation, confusion, and woe?
 Shall that sturdy form which all eyes must admire,
 That tongue which so often does laughter inspire,
 That countenance smiling with pleasure and joy
 Be stuck up as a mark for a gun to destroy?
 No! stay prithee do, and take care of thy life,
 And leave those who are worthless to join in the strife;
 For "one fool makes many", we oft have been told,
 And surely in war still the proverb will hold;
 For if no one loved fighting e'en better than I,
 The deuce, if a soldier the land would supply:*

*And therefore all strife and contentions would cease,
 And the great ones be forced for to patch up a peace.
 This is serving your country, its subjects to save,
 And protecting it more than the swords of the brave.
 Instead of the baggage and camps we see now,
 Send the women to knit, and the men to the plough;
 And say what you will, it much better would be,
 For then states would be quiet, and not disagree:
 And by frequent experience I've found it the best,
 In a skin undisturbed for to let my bones rest.*

The entertainment which I doubt not the above lines will afford you and your sister, must plead my excuse for delaying so long to subscribe myself,

Your very affectionate Aunt,

MARTHA BARTLATE

L E T T E R XXXII.

MISS BETSEY SEAMORE TO MISS SEAMORE.

DEAR SISTER,

MR. Quill has been here, and he is now gone, and he says I may write to you, if I will take pains, and hold my pen right: and my mamma has promised him that she will watch

watch me, and she is now setting by me, and so I have began a letter to you; and *John* will put it into the post-house presently, when he carries the horses to be shod; for I hear they are going to have new shoes to day; I heard *John* tell my papa so: And so then he will take my letter. My mamma says, you won't have it till the day after to-morrow; I am very sorry for that, because I wish you could have it directly, for then you might answer it you know, and I should like to have it *answered*; pray don't be long before you do answer it. I had a great many things to tell you, but I have wrote so much before I come to tell them, that I am quite tired, and so I must leave off.

And I am,

Your dear Sister,

ELIZABETH SEAMORE.

LETTER XXXIII.

MISS SEAMORE TO MISS BETSEY SEAMORE.

DEAR SISTER,

I RECEIVED your letter this morning, and according to your desire, I have begun to answer it as soon as possible; but I wish you had

not written so much as to tire yourself before you told me what you intended to say; because I like to hear all the news of the family, and you told me none, except that the horses were going to be shod, and that I cared the least about of any thing. I had rather a great deal, that you had told me whether your cat had kittened yet, and how many kittens she has, and what colours they are. And whether *Cato's* foot is well enough to go without the bandage. Poor fellow! I fancy it will be a good while before he forgets trying to jump over the wall. I am sure I don't think I shall ever forget seeing him hang upon the spike; and I would not have such another shocking sight for ever so much; it did make me *so* sick, as every thing does that looks shocking and unhappy. I wonder what the meaning of it is, for it does not only make me *sorry*, but feel just as if I had eaten something that disagreed with me, and was really ill. I am sure I should not like to be a Surgeon, or a Doctor at all, for I should never be comfortable or happy. Pray, in your next letter let me know if Miss *West*s have been to see you again yet; and whether Mrs. *South* has yet returned my mamma's visit; and if she brought all three of her children with her; and how Miss *Polly* behaved: for if she is always in the same humour as she was when we were there, I cannot say I shall often wish for her

her company. I intended to write my aunt an account of that afternoon, but I have not had time yet, and I don't now know when I shall have, for my grand-mamma likes I should be with her, and I must write to mamma: I did think of doing it to-day, but you seemed to be in such an hurry for an answer to your letter, that I thought I must send one directly. Pray, can *Tom* say his pence-table yet, or does he still continue to forget that fiftypence is four-and-twopence, for I think that is the place he always stops at? Has General *Dodsworth* brought him a drum? or does he still make use of the watering pot instead of one? All these are things that I much want to know, so pray don't forget in your next letter to tell me; and if you so soon grow tired of writing, begin directly, and be two or three days about it; but be sure and let me know before you finish. I have now got to the bottom of my paper, and as I have not subject enough to fill another sheet, I think it would be a pity to begin to waste one, by only writing a few lines upon it; and so I shall leave off with desiring you to give my duty to my papa and mamma, my love to *Tom*, and assuring you, that

I am,

Your very affectionate Sister,

HARRIOT SEAMORE.

 LETTER XXXIV.

Miss SEAMORE to Mrs. SEAMORE.

HONORED MADAM,

I AM a afraid you will think, whenever I come out, that I forget my dear friends I leave at home: but indeed that is not the reason of my being so long before I write, for I am sure I think of you almost all day; and if I am agreeably entertained, I wish you were all here to be so too; and if I am not quite so comfortable as I like, I wish you were here to make me so, for I *do* love you *dearly* indeed. But I was going to tell you why I did not write to you sooner, and the reason was this. You know you gave me some paper, pens, and ink, to bring with me; but I forgot to desire *Betty* to put them into my box, and left them upon the table where I laid them down when first you gave them me; and I never once thought of it till the morning after I came, when I rose very early on purpose to write to you, and let you know that we got here safe. But when I looked in my box I could not find my paper, and then recollected how foolishly I had forgotten it. My grand-mamma did not get up long before breakfast, (at least I did not see her before) and when she

came

came down, I told her of my distress, and asked her if she could give me any paper, and pens, and ink? She promised me she would, but as soon as ever breakfast was over, a Mrs. *Agefal* came to see her, and staid till I went to-bed, so that she never once thought of my paper, and I thought it would not be civil to ask her again, and disturb her when she had company; so that day went without my being able to write, and the next morning as I knew I could not, I lay in bed till I was called down to go to breakfast, and then as I was hurrying on my clothes as fast as ever I could when I found it was so late, a pin which I did not see in my cap, clawed hold of the thumb of my right hand, and tore a great bit of flesh out, and bled so much, we could hardly stop it. I asked my grand-mamma again for some paper and pens; but she said she thought I had much better keep my thumb wrapped up till it was well, and then she would give me some. But she did not think it was well till last *Saturday*, when she gave me some paper, and ink, and three pens; but when I tried to write with them, I could not make them do at all. I did begin a letter to you, but it looked so dreadfully bad, that I could not bear to go on, and send it you; for I am sure you would have thought that I had taken no care with my writing. I was so *provoked* I did not know
what

what to do, and after I had tried them all three over and over again, and scraped them as well as I could with my fruit-knife, I threw them all into the fire, and the letter that I had begun too. Soon after my grand-mamma came into my room to ask me if I had almost done, and was ready to take a walk with her? I told her, her pens were so bad I could not write with them, and had not got one word forwarder. She said she was sorry for it, for they were the best she had, and indeed *all* she had in the house, for she was quite out of pens, and if I did not like them, she should be glad of them again, as she was going to write a letter to my aunt. I then told her I had burnt them, for they were good for nothing. Burnt them have you! said she, (and I thought she did not look quite pleased,) if you did not *like* them, you might have returned them, for I should have been glad of them, for I want a pen sadly. She did not say any more about it, and I *felt* so disagreeable, that I did not know what to do with myself, and so sorry that I could not write to you, for I thought you would expect to hear from me. In the afternoon Mr. *Shepherd* came to drink tea with us, and he talked a great deal to me, and asked if I could write and read; and he heard me say the Catechism, and I read two chapters in the Bible to him. And my grand-mamma told him our

distress

distress for pens ; and said she must trouble him again for some, (for I find he makes all her pens) so he promised to send her some, and on Monday morning he brought a whole heap, and a little book for me, called “ *The Principles of Religion, made easy to young Persons, in a short and familiar Catechism, by the the Bishop of St. David’s.*” He staid whilst I read part of it, I like the book vastly, and I heard him tell my grand-mamma that it was the best Catechism for children he ever met with in all his life. You cannot think what an agreeable man he is, and my grand-mamma says, he is a very good man too, and does a great deal of good in the parish, and takes much care of all poor people ; he has got a wife, and she is a good woman, and four sons, and *nineteen* grand-children, some of whom are always with him, and they are all very good too: we are to go and see them some day. As soon as Mr. *Shepherd* was gone, I intended to have written to you, but the post brought me a letter from my sister, and she seemed in such a hurry for an answer, that I thought I had better send her one directly, and when I had finished that, it was too late to begin one to you, and so you see that this is the first opportunity I have had, but now I have got some pens that I can use (though I don’t think they are very good ones) I shall write to you again soon,

soon, which will give me another opportunity of telling you with what pleasure

I am,

Your dutiful daughter,

HARRIOT SEAMORE.

L E T T E R X X X V .

Mrs. SEAMORE to Miss SEAMORE.

I AM glad to find that absence does not make you forgetful of those friends, the earnest desire of whose lives is to make you happy ; for believe me, *Harriot*, after seeing you *good*, the first prayer of my heart is, that you you may be as *happy* as the present scene of existence can permit. That desire you express of having us with you to partake of your entertainments pleases me much, as it shews a generosity of temper which I am always glad to discover in any one ; but when I find it possessed by my children, it very sincerely rejoices me indeed. I could not bear the thought of my girls being such *selfish* mortals, as, provided they were pleased and comfortable themselves, not to regard the

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the feelings of others. Yet though it is a kind of temper every one must dislike when beheld in the person of another, too many are to be found guilty of it in almost every instance of their lives. Hence arises much of that uneasiness which is felt upon earth, and which might easily be prevented by the observation of that one benevolent precept of our Divine Master "*of doing to others as we would they should do unto us.*" And from the neglect of this proceeds most, if not *all* of those disagreements: an unhappiness which the generality of mankind labour under. Did Miss *Crump* but regulate her conduct by this rule, she would not so often cause the tears to flow from the eyes of a fond mother, by her unkind and undutiful behaviour. Instead of *snapping* and speaking so *cross* to her, because she has the misfortune of being deaf, she would reflect, that if she was in those unhappy circumstances herself, she would then like her daughter (had she one) to speak to her, and sometimes repeat what she was not at first happy enough to hear. And was she as unable to help herself as *her* mother, no doubt but she would think it very unkind if her child was so little to assist her, and so frequently to tell her, that she was *very troublesome*. I declare I have often been scarce able to keep my tongue from reproving her, when I have heard and seen the way in which she has behaved. I drank tea

there one day since you left us, and she shewed no greater attention than usual; but in several instances discovered such want, not only of *affection*, but of mere *christian charity*, that quite astonished me. Mrs. *Crump* was sitting with her right hand next the fire, which scorched her face and increased the pain of her eye; with her left (the other you know being lame) in a very awkward posture she was holding her handkerchief by way of a screen. I could not help asking if she had not better move backward. I should like it, said she, but it is so *much* trouble. I then offered to help her, and her daughter came and moved her chair. About two hours afterwards, when the fire was burnt very low, as if begging a mighty *favor*, she said “ *Polly!* the fire is not now so scorching as it was, and I feel a sad wind from the door to my shoulder, I should be obliged to you if you would assist me to move again.” *Very well!* replied *Polly*, and sat still. I did not offer to help her for a few minutes, for the sake of seeing what she intended to do; but she did not attempt to stir, till her mother again said, “ My dear, *will* you be so kind as to come, for I am afraid I shall take cold?” Upon her saying this, *Polly* threw down her work, and *then* spoke loud enough for her mother to hear, “ Law! you are in such a hurry! I just now you wanted to go *back*, and now you

you want to come *forward*, I wish you would learn to know your own mind." She then pushed her chair for her. Poor Mrs. *Crump* *thanked* her, and I saw the tears fall upon her lame hand as it lay in her lap. She had dropped her handkerchief, and did not *dare* to ask for it. I observed she wanted it, and taking it up, gave it her. She bowed as she received it, but her heart was too full to speak, nor could I at that moment have answered her. I felt so much for her afflictions, that I could scarcely recover myself the rest of the evening. And what must her daughter's heart be composed of, not only to bear to *see*, but *herself* to *cause* her such bitter sorrow? Had her mother in her *infant* years as unkindly have neglected *her*, nor better attended to all *her* little wants and pleasures, she would never have had it in her power to repay her with such *ingratitude*; for she must long since have perished for want of care. How unkind! how wicked therefore it is, to return such evil for the good she has so long received; and how different from doing as she would like to be done by. I found your paper and pens after you was gone, and could not help in my own mind a little condemning your carelessness: for if you remember, my dear, I told you of them two or three times; but I hope the difficulty you have found in procuring others will teach you greater precau-

tion for the future. Nothing, *Harriot*, instructs us so well as *experience*, and *feeling* the inconveniences which proceed from our own folly, will more effectually cure us of committing the same again, than a hundred wise lectures upon the subject would have done. And on this consideration I shall spare my admonitions relating to your laying in bed so long, because you had no paper; as if *writing* had been the only method in which you could have *employed* and *improved* your time: but as the *pin* was so obliging as to correct you for your needless hurry, I hope it will be some time before you so endanger your poor thumb and fingers again. I am glad likewise to find upon another occasion, that your own *conscience* has spared me any disagreeable reflections; but since you *did* feel very uncomfortable (no doubt from the sense of having acted very improperly in being so *provoked* with the three pens) I shall say no more upon the subject, as I doubt not your own reflections will be such, as sufficiently to convince you of the great folly of suffering such trivial accidents, to discompose the serenity of your mind. I hope you remember to make proper acknowledgments to Mr. *Shepherd* for the kind notice he has taken of you. I believe him to be a very good man indeed: and I assure you, I look upon great part of my present happiness to be owing to the good instructions

tions and advice I received from him in my youth. He was always so obliging as to take much notice of your aunt and myself, and very kindly troubled himself to tell us of any errors he saw in our conduct, and convinced us how much our interest it was to be *good* and behave as we should do. Of his kindness I shall ever retain the most grateful remembrance; and am happy in the thought, that you have now an opportunity of partaking of his instructive conversation. I beg you will present my best compliments to him and Mrs. *Shepherd*, and assure them I esteem myself much obliged by the attention they pay to *you*. Your papa joins with me in duty to your grand-mamma, and love to yourself, and desires me to *assure* you, that he is no less fond of you than is,

Your most affectionate Mother,

MARY SEAMORE.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

Miss SEAMORE to Mrs. SEAMORE.

HONORED MADAM,

WE have been to Mr. *Shepherd's*, and I gave your compliments to him; but I

could not say any thing about your being obliged by the attention they shewed to me; so that part of your message I did not deliver. I hope you will not be angry about it, for indeed I could not get it out. I suppose, Ma'am, if you remember Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd when you was a girl, you also remember Mrs. Shelly, Mrs. Shepherd's mother, for my grand-mamma says, she has lived with them a great many years. You cannot think what an old woman she is: I never saw any body so old in all my life, and she is as deaf as Mrs. Crump, and quite blind, and not able to help herself at all; but sets in her chair from the time she gets up, which is at eleven o'clock, till she goes to-bed, which is a little before nine, without doing any thing. She does not talk much, but what she does say is always very good-humoured. My grand-mamma tells me she is ninety-eight years old. But you cannot think how different Mrs. Shepherd, and the Miss Shepherds her great grand-children behave to her from Miss Crump: for instead of speaking cross if she desires them to do any thing, they ask her if they can do any thing for her? or if she should like to have any thing? And Miss Mary Shepherd (she is not a little girl, but eighteen years old) fed her at tea-time, and afterwards went and set by her, to rub her hands because they were cold, and seemed to take great care

of

of her indeed; and before we came away, she gave her her supper. I thought about Miss *Crump*. And if she knew how much better it looked to behave like Miss *Shepherd*, she surely would never be so cross to her mother again. I was quite disappointed when I went to Mr. *Shepherd's*; for my grand-mamma told me some of their grandchildren were there; and I expected to find some boys and girls young enough to play with me: instead of which, they were as big as women; all but one boy, and he was fourteen years old: he did not come in the room till after tea, and then brought a book, which he set and read all the time. Mr. *Shepherd* told him he thought it was not quite civil to read in company; but he said, he hoped the company would excuse him, for his father would come the next day, and expect him to give an account of the book; and if he did not read it, he should be able to give but a bad one. I read to my grand-mamma every day, and she thinks I read very well, she says. She has been so kind as to teach me to knit, and I have finished a pair of garters. *Betty* (one of the maid) says, she thinks my grand-mamma need not have taught me that; as it is very *strange, ugly* work for a *young lady*; and she says, if *she* was me, she would not do any more. I did not tell my grand-mamma this, because I thought after she had taken the trouble to teach me, it would look

look ungrateful ; but I should be obliged to you, Ma'am, if you would send me word whether I had better do any more or not, for I don't see any harm it can do me ; but if you don't think it proper work for me, I certainly will not continue it. We are going this afternoon to a Mr. *Frisk's*, and as we dine at two o'clock, and I am not yet dressed, I must now conclude, though it is always with reluctance I leave writing to you. Pray give my duty to my papa, and tell *Betsy*, I am expecting a long letter from her, and

I am,

My dearest Madam,

Your very dutiful Daughter,

HARRIOT SEAMORE.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

Mrs. SEAMORE to Miss SEAMORE.

AND what was the cause that my dear girl *could not* deliver my message to Mr. and Mrs. *Shepherd*? Was she at that time seized with an impediment in her speech? or what prevented her from being able to say as she was desired? Shall I tell you what it was, *Harriot*? A foolish bashfulness, which never is productive of any good,

good ; and differs almost as widely from *real modesty*, as light from darkness. As I have frequently told you, I would upon no account wish you to be possessed of that pert assurance, as to join in every conversation, or always give your opinion upon every subject, whether it was required or not : such a degree of courage in any one, especially in a girl of your age, is most exceedingly displeasing, and discovers a disposition very far from that a young woman *ought* to possess. But at the same time, my love, that I thus express my abhorrence of *every* degree of *pertness*, or a *boldness* of behaviour ; I by no means would be understood to condemn that *proper* degree of *courage*, which is perfectly consistent with the highest modesty ; and without which it is impossible to pass through life with half that gracefulness, ease, or power of pleasing, as when directed by it. A most striking instance of this, my dear, you may have observed in the conduct of Miss *Lylod*, a young woman of real sense, and improved understanding ; who yet from her ridiculous sheepishness, passes in the eye of the world as a person of no *judgement*, and destitute of *education*. A few of her most intimate friends are convinced of her good sense, and value her for many excellent qualities ; her understanding *they* know to be good, and readily appeal to her judgment on every weighty occasion. What a pity then it is, that

that that judgment should be so clouded by her *outward behaviour*, as to render it impossible for the world in general, or any of her common acquaintance to discover she has any. Like yourself, she *cannot* make the common speeches of civility which are necessary in the intercourse of the world: not that she is *ignorant*, or does not *know* what *ought* to be said upon every occasion; but she has not *courage* for it; and she cannot get those words out, which she is well convinced are most proper to be spoken. For this reason (because instead of resolutely exerting herself to conquer her natural weakness, she absurdly gives way to, and indulges it,) she sets almost totally silent when in company, and returns every little civility that is paid her, with the most *awkward* confusion. I once was present when a lady in company offered to convey her somewhere she was going, provided she would put up with the inconvenience of being five in the coach. She accepted of the offer, but instead of making any kind of apology for *troubling* or *crowding* her, only said, "I thank you, Ma'am, I shan't *mind* that." Now, though undoubtedly there was no real *harm* in her words, yet they did sound so *blunt*, so very unlike a young lady who had received any education, that I could not help being grieved she should be so much her own enemy, and so little display that *sense* and *understanding* with
which

which is blessed. When she was gone, her conduct was mentioned by two or three of the company in no very advantageous terms. One observed she was the *stupidest* young woman she ever saw: a second said, she *looked* as if she had sense, but was too *proud* to speak: and a third remarked, she certainly had received no *education*, or ever been in company before. As I was well acquainted with her *real* character, I knew that what appeared so *disadvantageous* was occasioned only by too great *diffidence*. I undertook to be her advocate, and pleaded every argument I could urge in excuse for her behaviour. I said, I was intimately acquainted with her, and knew her to be a girl of *sound sense* and *great good-sense*, and that her behaviour proceeded entirely from too much *bashfulness* and want of resolution to exert herself. I was listened to with attention, and as it would have been rude to proceed with condemning her after I professed an intimacy with her, the company were silent; but I assure you, none of them appeared to give credit to what I advanced: and I felt most sincerely sorry she should by so trifling a circumstance, prejudice so many against her. Let this, my dear girl, be a warning to you, and teach you upon no account to give way to that timidity, which will make you feel so uncomfortable to yourself, and appear so awkward in the sight of others. But I
must

must again warn you not to mistake me, or suppose that I am recommending an *unmeaning talkativeness*, or *pert forwardness* of behaviour, since such a conduct is even far *more disgusting* than the bashful silence of Miss *Lylod*. I very well remember Mrs. *Shelly*, she was always a great favorite of mine upon account of her good-nature and sweetness of manners. In her present infirm superannuated state you can form no judgment of the kind of woman she was, when possessed of all her faculties. The last time I saw her, which is about five years ago, she had all her senses perfect, except her eyes, which were too bad to permit her to do any thing, though she could see well enough to move about the house, and distinguish any body that came into the room. I never shall forget the conversation we then had together, and as long as I live I hope shall endeavour to follow her advice. Some of her great grand-children were in the room: one of the little ones about three years old asked her, why she did not work, and not set so idle all day? Ah! my dear, said she, I *am* idle indeed, but I would not be so if I could see to do any thing; but my eyes are worn out: every thing wears out in time, and my eyes are *very* old. Then turning to me she said: Old age, Mrs. *Scamore*, is no very desirable state, I assure you; it is full of pains, and aches, and infirmities. I am, thank
God,

God, better than at my time of life I could have reason to expect; and yet if some years ago, I had felt as I do now, I should have thought myself very *ill* indeed; for I have pains in my back, and my legs, and my arms, and my sight is almost out, and my ears begin to grow deaf, and I am too weak to move about; in short, I am fit for nothing but to *die*; and if I was not ready for *that*, what would become of me? I often think of those foolish people who put off preparing themselves for death whilst they are young, and think that they shall have time enough when they come to be old. Bless them! if they knew what a state old age is, they would not think they could do much then. If I had not taken care in the days of my youth, to make God my friend, I wonder what I could do to make him so now, when I have hardly memory sufficient to recollect the transactions of one week, much less of my whole life. If I had now got to confess all the sins I have committed, and implore forgiveness for them, I fear I should do it but badly; and fall asleep perhaps, before I had recollected a hundredth part of them; for I am very drowsy, and often fall asleep without intending it. Besides, supposing that I could confess all the faults of my life, and ask forgiveness for them, is it to be supposed that God would accept of my prayers, now that I have it not in my power

to perform any of the duties of life. An old feeble person, like me, can do nothing but be *patient*: and if when I was *young*, I had neglected what I then ought to do, how would it be possible for me now to make amends for my past neglects? If when I was a child, I had not behaved dutifully to my parents, how could I now, that *they* are dead and *I* am old, possibly undo that sin, or make any recompence for it? Or if when I was a parent myself, I had not been a good mother, and taken proper care of my children, it would be impossible for me to instruct, or be of any service to them now. All that would now remain for me would be wretchedness and sorrow. Whereas at present, though I have many bodily infirmities, yet I have the satisfaction to think, that I always endeavoured to perform my duty through every stage of my life, and have now nothing to do, but to wait with *patience* for my death. Whenever God shall think fit to call me, I shall be ready to go; but till that time, whilst I have my senses, I will by my cheerfulness and patience, shew my family that I am not tired of life, so long as they by their dutiful care try to make it as comfortable as they can. And if you Mrs. *Seamore* would wish to be as composed as I am, if ever you should live to be old, remember always to do your duty in every state of life to which it shall please God to call you;

and

and teach your children to do theirs, that they may be as happy likewise.—In this manner did she talk for a considerable time, but though to *me* it was one of the most delightful conversations I ever heard, possibly you may think I have already dwelt too long upon it: I will therefore instantly release you, after once more assuring you of the unalterable affection of

Your fond Mother,

MARY SEAMORE.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mrs. SEAMORE to Miss SEAMORE.

IRAN my last letter to such a length, that I had not room left to speak to that part of your's which required an answer, relating to your knitting. I was much pleased with that degree of consideration you shewed in not speaking to your grand-mamma about it, since you thought it would have had the appearance of *ingratitude*. If so it appeared in your judgment, you was much in the right to avoid every thing that you thought would in the least look like that ugly disposition, and I commend you highly

for your precaution, though I confess myself, I do not see if you had told her what *Betty* said, and begged the favor of *her* opinion about it, that it would have shewn any signs of *ingratitude*, and she would have been pleased with your placing that confidence in her. I yesterday received a letter from her, wherein she is so kind as to say many obliging things of you, and expresses very warmly the pleasure she enjoys in your company. She says you behave to her with all proper respect, and at the same with such lively freedom, as makes her flatter herself you do not dislike your visit to her. You cannot imagine, my *Harriot*, the delight such good accounts of your conduct gives me, and convinces me, that I have not erred in my judgment, by forming a high opinion of your merit. I would not tell every girl what fine things were said of her; but I am sure you have sense enough only to make a *proper* use of the commendation of your friends, and to be inspired by it to a perseverance in all those *duties* and *accomplishments* which you know will afford them satisfaction. But whilst thinking on so pleasing a subject as the goodness of my dear child, I seem to have left that of the knitting still unanswered; and if I don't take care, shall seal this letter, as I did my last, without replying to your question. Whilst I
think,

think of it therefore, let me beg you to go on with your new acquirement, and make all the proficiency you can during your visit to your grand-mamma. How it could enter into any body's head to think so useful a thing as *knitting* below the dignity of a *young lady*, I cannot imagine. *Betty* must certainly have formed very wrong notions of *young ladies*, to suppose any useful employment, which does not prejudice either their *morals* or their *manners*, is below their dignity, at proper seasons for them to learn. For supposing they should never have *occasion* for the performance of those things they have learned, yet surely the *knowledge* of them will be productive of no harm, and they will be much better qualified to give directions to others, than if they were totally ignorant in what manner they ought to be performed. Besides, in the present instance, *knitting* is an employment which may be highly useful; especially, if either through old age, or any other cause, your sight should ever be affected, and then though it may be easily performed when once you are mistress of it, it will be but a bad season to *begin to learn*: youth being, you may assure yourself, the time when every kind of improvement is the most easily acquired. That you, my dear girl, may make proper use of so valuable a period, and every day

make some advances in knowledge and goodness,
is the ceaseless prayer of

Your most affectionate Mother,

MARY SEAMORE.

L E T T E R X X X I X .

MISS BETSEY SEAMORE to MISS SEAMORE.

DEAR SISTER,

I AM going to begin this letter, *Harriot*, as you desired I would, now directly, and write at it a great many times, till it is quite finished, and then I shall send it to the post. And I intend to tell you all the news; and as you want to know about my cat, I will tell you about her. She kittened the day after you went, in the little closet under the stairs where we keep our clogs: and she had five of the sweetest prettiest creatures you ever saw in all your life; I never saw such pretty kittens in the world before: three of them were like their mother, and the other two are quite white almost, all but some black upon their faces and tails, and one of them has a black ear. These two are both alive, one for us and one for Miss *West*; but the other three are all drowned; for my mamma said, she could not afford to keep

keep such a number of cats. I was very sorry to have them drowned, for I wanted them all to live. And when I am a woman, all the kittens which my cats have shall live I am determined, and I will have a place built on purpose to let them live in; for why should not my cats have a house for themselves as well as Mr. Norris's dogs; for I like cats better than dogs. Well, now I have told you all about my cat, and I must look at your letter to see what you next want to know about. O! you next want to know about *Cato's* foot: why that is pretty well. Next you want to know whether Miss *West's* and Miss *South's* have been to see us? Miss *West's* have not, and Miss *South's* have. Miss *Polly* was not so cross as she was the day we were there, though I did not much like her, for though she was not *so* cross, yet she was not very good-humoured, and if we did not play just as she liked, she would not play at all. *Tom* can say the pence table quite perfect, as it is in the book; but if he is asked *dodging* he cannot tell what any thing is. The General has brought him the drum he promised him, and a nice noise it does make, I *wish* I had one with all my heart. I said so once in the parlour, and the General laughed at me so much you cannot think, and said I should have a pair of breeches and be a soldier, and then I should have a drum; but

but if I was a little girl I must not have drums. And now I have told you all the news, and have been three days writing it, and have got to the bottom of my paper as you say, and as I cannot think of any thing in the world more to say, I must leave off. My mamma says, I should send my duty to my grand-mamma, and so pray don't forget to give it her, and my mamma's too, and her love to you, and

I am,

My dear Harriot,

Your very dear Sister,

ELIZABETH SEAMORE.

LETTER XL.

MISS SEAMORE to MRS. BARTLATE.

HONORED MADAM,

WHEN I first came to my grand-mamma's, I quite enjoyed the thoughts of having *three* correspondents; but I begin to find I don't like having so many, as I cannot possibly write to them so often as I should do. In my last letter to you, (which is now so long ago that

that perhaps you have forgot it) I promised to give you some account of our visit to Mrs. South; but I have never yet found an opportunity to do that, or to thank you for those verses of *Dick Stanhope's*, which you was so kind as to send me. I like them prodigiously, and have learnt them by heart, and am much obliged to you for them. I hope you will remember how very fond I am of poetry, and send me all you can meet with. But now I will tell you about Miss Souths. When we went they were all three in the drawing room with their mamma ready to receive us, sitting upon stools the same as the chairs, which were worked in cross-stitch, in a very pretty pattern, with blue silk and worsted. They were all dressed in muslin frocks over pink coats, and black caps with pink ribbons in them; and all held up their heads, and looked very genteel, though Miss *Polly*, which is the middle one, is the only one which is pretty. The name of the eldest is *Jane*, and the youngest *Ann*. At tea-time there was a silver basket of different sorts of cakes; but they none of them had any; as *their* mamma, like *mine*, does think either cakes or butter proper for them; so we all had dry bread. As Miss *Ann* carried back her cup, a little crumb of cake lay upon the table, which she put into her mouth: it was *but* a crumb, and her mamma took no notice of it: but when she returned

returned to her seat, her sister *Polly* said, Pie! *Ann*, I wonder how you could be so naughty as to eat that cake. O! said *Ann*, it was but a crumb, and I am sure that could not hurt me. May be not, replied Miss *Polly*, but it was very wrong to take it, as you know your mamma don't think it good for you: I am sure I would not do so. Soon after this had happened, she told her sister *Jane* to hold up her head, saying, Do, my dear, remember and hold up your head, for you know how much pains our kind mamma takes to teach us to set upright. And one time when Miss *Ann* was stooping down to pat a little dog, she touched her, and said, Don't do so, for you know our mamma told us, it was very rude to play with dogs or cats in company. When I found she took so much care, not only to remember herself, but also to make her sisters do what was right, I felt quite pleased with her, and thought I should grow very fond of her for a play-fellow, and she spoke so prettily and gracefully to my mamma, or any body that spoke to her, that I was in hopes she would be able to improve me. But I was so disappointed and surprised when we went into another room to play, you cannot imagine. Upon the table there stood the remainder of the cakes that were left at tea; and the moment we went in, she ran and snatched up a large piece
and

and began eating it. There, said *Ann*, I think now, *Polly*, you need not find fault with my putting that one crumb into my mouth, when you eat so much yourself. Well, never mind what *I* do, said she, take care and behave properly yourself, and pray leave me to do as I please, which I promise you I shall do without asking your leave. Miss *Jane* then said, I do not suppose you will ask our leave to do any thing; but it is very provoking you should always make yourself appear the best girl in the world whilst you are in company, and before your mamma; and yet behave so bad when she is out of sight. I am sure that is much worse than any crime ~~we~~ are ever guilty of. I don't care, said *Polly*, you may preach till your tongue is tired, I shall not alter my conduct to please you, I promise you *Miss*; for with all your *fine* talking you know your mamma says I am the best girl of any of you, and I shall therefore go on in my own way, and you may keep good *out* of sight if you will; but I chuse to behave best when I am *seen*. Ah! *Polly*, replied *Jane*, if our mamma knew how you behaved every time you are out of her presence, I am sure she would not say you was the *best* girl, for indeed you are very *wicked*. And you are *very wise*, said she, and down she sat herself in her elbow chair, and drew it directly before the fire, so that nobody else could feel it.

Her

Her sisters desired her to move, but she would not, neither would she play all the evening, because she was so affronted with being found fault with. And her sisters told me that was the manner she always behaved. A little time before we were to return into the drawing-room, she went and stood out in the garden to cool her face and neck before her mamma saw her. And when we went into the room she looked so good-humoured, and behaved so well, I could hardly think what I had seen and heard was true. My mamma observed how prettily she behaved, and how handsomely she spoke. And then *her* mamma said, I think she does behave pretty tolerably well, she is a good girl, and takes great care to remember what she is told. I felt so vexed when she said so, I did not know what to do; and if I had not thought it would look very ill-natured, I should have told her how sadly she behaved when out of her sight. I told my mamma when I got home all this history, and she said, had she known it, she would not have praised her behaviour. I had a letter from my sister yesterday, and she tells me that they have returned the visit, but Miss *Polly* did not behave so bad as when we were there. We both liked the other two very well, and they appear very good-humoured and agreeable girls. I hope I shall have no reason to alter my mind about them,

them, as I did about their sister. I am afraid you will be tired of this long account of these little girls, but I have thought so much about it ever since, that I could not help troubling you with it, as I always want you and my mamma to know every thing that employs my thoughts, and as you tell me to write whatever comes into my head, I hope you will excuse this account from

Your most dutiful

And affectionate Niece,

HARRIOT SEAMORE.

L E T T E R XLI.

Mrs. BARTLATE to Miss SEAMORE.

I AM sorry my dear girl should ever think it necessary to make any apology for writing on whatever subject presents itself to her thoughts. Believe me, my love, there would be no call for it, though you were not writing to one who feels for you all that ardour of affection with which my bosom glows towards you. The stile of your letters I am certain could never be censured, con-

G

sidering

sidering your age; and the beauty of epistolary compositions, consists in an easy recital of most familiar and trivial occurrences. Always endeavour to let your expressions be good, and your language as pure as possible; but never, my love, give yourself any concern about your *subject*: whatever occupies your mind, at the moment of writing, will flow with ease from your pen, and discover more exactly your opinions and sentiments, than any studied composition can possibly do; and believe me, whatever appears most *natural*, will always be more highly esteemed by all good judges, than any *laboured endeavours* after *sublimity of style* or *importance of subject*. And this I would wish you to observe with regard to all your writings in general; but when addressing yourself to *me*, be assured, nothing can afford me equal satisfaction with being made acquainted with all the thoughts and sentiments of your heart: a heart so good and innocent, that I am sure it harbours no one thought it need wish to conceal from the knowledge of its friends; for should its opinions be erroneous, so long as error proceeds alone from want of *judgment* and *experience*, there can be nothing *criminal* in it, and by confessing it, you afford an opportunity for those, who by living longer have gained more wisdom, to rectify any mistaken notions you may have formed. Let me therefore conjure my dear girl,

never

never through a false shame, to endeavour to hide from the eye of her parents or myself any sentiment of her heart; but by laying it open to our observation, put it in our powers to point out to you those things which are blameable, and encourage those that are praise-worthy. The many advantages resulting from the frankness of conduct I am now recommending, are more than you at present can imagine, and half the wickedness we daily see practiced in the world, is originally owing to a contrary behaviour. With *great spirits*, and *little understanding*, it is absolutely impossible for children to form proper judgment of men or things: at the same time that they are thus liable to mistake, they have naturally a prodigious good opinion of their own understandings, without considering how impossible (from their youth) it is to have acquired much experience, they flatter themselves that they know as well as their elders, and therefore foolishly neglect to discover their own sentiments, or ask the advice of others, till their errors are so deeply rooted in their minds they can hardly ever be eradicated, and consequently, produce all that absurdity in their future lives, which we so frequently see practiced, to the disgrace of human nature. The account you give of Miss *Polly South* is, I think most truly terrible, and her faults appear in a doubly shocking light,

by reason of her so well *knowing* in what manner she *ought* to behave, to gain the approbation of her friends. Our crimes are certainly augmented in proportion to our knowledge of good and evil; and it is impossible she can act in the manner you describe, without being thoroughly acquainted with what is *right*; consequently, her fault is greatly aggravated. The sin of hypocrisy is, in my opinion, one of the most detestable we can be guilty of, as well as highly prejudicial to society, by so much confounding virtue and vice, as to make it almost impossible to discover what is right or wrong. A person artful enough to *appear* virtuous only for the sake of *praise*, at the same time that they scruple not to commit any sin which they think will not be *detected*, must be possessed of a very bad and wicked *heart*; therefore cannot be deserving of *approbation* or *esteem*, though by their outward behaviour they seem to demand our greatest respect and love. Miss *Polly*'s conduct, whilst in the presence of her mamma, was such as at once gained your admiration, and you flattered yourself, that in her you should find an agreeable companion and play-fellow: but upon finding her turn out so different to what you expected, you was much disappointed; and though you discovered nothing wrong in the behaviour of her sisters, still you are almost afraid
of

of permitting yourself to like them, lest you should on farther acquaintance, again find yourself deceived. And this one instance, my love, sufficiently proves the pernicious effects of hypocrisy, and shews you how much one *artful* hypocrite may prejudice many *innocent* persons, by causing them to be suspected of crimes they may scorn to commit. But wicked as it is, since too many are to be found who are guilty of it, though we should be careful not to lose our *charity*, and suspect any one before we have sufficient cause, yet it should so far teach us to be upon our guard, as to prevent our forming hasty friendship, before we have had an opportunity of knowing the characters of those with whom we converse; otherwise we may frequently have cause to repent the choice we have made, and find it absolutely necessary to break off the intimacy we have began: and nothing discovers a greater want of discernment and judgment in a young lady than that frequent change of *friends* some are so apt to make. We ought most undoubtedly to behave with civility and good-humour to every body we are in company with; but to profess a *love* and *attachment* towards any person before we have had sufficient knowledge of their merits *deserving* our esteem, is highly ridiculous; and, as I before observed, proves great deficiency of

sense and *judgment* in ourselves. The name of *Friend* carries in it a thousand charms, and young people rejoice in being distinguished by the appellation, and for that reason hastily bestow the honor on, and receive it from any of their acquaintance with whom they may chance to spend an agreeable day or two: not considering that to be *worthy* of the title, they must be possessed of such good qualities, as are capable, not only of pleasing for a *day*; but for *life*, and even more than that, of *virtues* that will continue through *eternity*: for poor and defective must be that friendship which will not last through every change of life, and give us good reason to hope, that though death may *divide* us, yet it will not put a period to the happiness of those we so dearly love. And if we are permitted to know one another in a future world, we shall again be reunited to part no more. The duties and qualifications of friendship are therefore of too great and important a nature to be discharged with indifference; for which reason, the engagement ought not to be entered into without due consideration. But it would run this letter (already pretty long) beyond all bounds, to enter upon a particular detail of all its obligations at present: some other time I may perhaps enlarge upon the subject, at present will hasten to conclude, after assuring you

you of what I trust you stand in need of no fresh professions to be convinced, that

I am, with the warmest Affection,

Your very sincere Friend and Aunt,

MARTHA BARTLATE.

LETTER XLII.

MISS SEAMORE to MRS. BARTLATE.

DEAR MADAM,

IF I can but always remember what I am taught, I think I stand a chance of being a very wise woman; for I am sure I am never in company with my friends, or receive any letter from you or my mamma, without being instructed in something I did not know or think of before. I never understood before I had your last letter, that *friends* had any other *duty* to do for each other, besides that of being very *intimate*, and *loving* one another. I know that Miss *Clack* and Miss *Languish* are great *friends*, and very often together, but I never heard them say any thing about their *duties*: only one time when I went to play with them, Miss *Clack* took Miss *Languish* into the
corner

corner and whispered her a good while, and then when she came back again, she said to me, “ You will excuse me, Miss *Seamore*, but *Nancy Languish* is my friend you know, and so it is proper I should tell her all my secrets.” If therefore, my dearest Madam, you know of any more duties relating to *friendship*, I should be much obliged to you if you would tell them me, for indeed I do love *Jenny Right* very much, and I am sure she does me; and I should much wish to behave properly towards her. I hope what you said in your last letter will be of great service; not only to me, but likewise to another young lady. The day I received it, I went with my grand-mamma to dine at a Mrs. *Bentley’s*: she has two children, a boy, who is at school, and a girl, who is a year younger than me, though she is above a head taller: I never saw such a tall handsome girl in my life. Like the Miss *Souths*, she behaved very gracefully and well whilst she was in the parlour, and her papa and mamma called her my *dear*, and my *love*, at every word, and seemed very fond of her. When we went to play, we asked one another how many brothers and sisters each had? whether we went to school? how old we were? and such kind of questions. And she enquired if my papa and mamma were good-natured, or whether they found much fault with me? I told her they were both

both *extremely* good-natured, nor did I think it any sign of being otherwise when they did find fault with me, for I was very sure they were wiser, and knew better than I did, and only did it for my good, and they both loved me so dearly, that they would not deny me what was proper for me to have, or to do. That to be sure, said she, is very true; my papa and mamma I know are very fond of me, but for all that I don't like to be *huffed*. I then said, I don't like to be huffed either, but I never am, unless I *deserve* it, which is not very often; for I always try to do as they bid me, and never do any thing they desire me not. O! said she, you are *wonderful good* indeed! I suppose then if you was me, you would not set so close to the fire, with your neck against this closet door, if they had desired you not? No, that *indeed* I would not, said I; I should think myself very naughty if I did any thing out of their sight which they did not like; it is being quite a *wicked hypocrite*, my aunt says it is. I then took your letter out of my pocket and read it to her. I was very glad I had it about me, as I very seldom have, for I generally lock them up as soon as I have read them, for fear they should be lost. After I had done reading it, she said it was a very pretty letter, and seemed very true, and she would try and mind it. Just when she
had

had told me this, we were called down, and had no more time to talk about it the rest of the day; but Mrs. *Bently* promised my grand-mamma that she would return her visit whilst I staid, so I intend then to ask her about it, and I will let you know what she says. I am much obliged to you for the advice you gave me about my writing, and you see I follow it, by telling you all that comes into my head; but at present nothing more does, so I will leave off, after having subscribed myself,

Your most dutiful, affectionate,

And much obliged Niece,

HARRIOT SEAMORE.

L E T T E R XLIII.

Mrs. BARTLATE to Miss SEAMORE.

HOW truly happy does my dear girl make me, by receiving as an *obligation*, that advice which so many of her tender age would either reject with scorn, or peruse only as the severe admonitions of a person, who being past childhood herself, was forgetful of all the pleasures

fures as well as follies attending it. But my beloved *Harriot* discovers superior sense to such a mode of arguing; and justly considers, that as no one can be a good conductor in a road they have never travelled, so no one can so well caution against all the errors of youth, as those who have themselves passed that dangerous period, and are therefore well acquainted with all the snares and temptations with which it is surrounded. Believe me, my love, however I may advise you at all times to keep steadily to the law of *right*, I have not forgotten how *difficult* it is sometimes to do it, or how easy to deviate to the *wrong*. But, my dear child, though *difficult*, it is not *impossible*; and it is to those only who *overcome* difficulties that a reward is promised. A reward! my *Harriot*, so far beyond our utmost deserts, that all we can *do*, all we can *resist*, are not worthy being thought of in comparison of it. Convinced of this truth, it is that I most anxiously wish to inspire my beloved girl with sentiments worthy of one, who professes to be a *Christian*, a *child of God*, and an *inheritor* of the *kingdom of Heaven*. A partaker of which glories no one, be assured, will ever be, who will not exert themselves; and however difficult the task, resolutely endeavour to fulfil their duties. Every age and station has its different task allotted it; and though all are proportioned to the persons.

to

to whom they are assigned, still no one is without its trials and temptations. The state of childhood is far from being exempt; as soon as our reason begins to dawn, so soon have we some little duties to perform: at first obedience to our parents and superiors is all that is required; but as our understandings enlarge, and we are made acquainted with an Almighty God, the Governor and Protector of all things, our duties likewise become more numerous, and we no longer are to obey our parents *meerly* because *they* desire it, but from a still higher motive, because *commanded by our God*. However little Miss *Polly South*, or Miss *Bently*, or children in general may consider it in this point of view, still it is the only motive which ought to regulate all our actions; and did we but reflect upon it as we ought, would certainly keep us from ever transgressing. For though when out of the presence of their parents they may eat cake, set by the fire, or do any thing forbidden them, without being either detected or punished, still they should remember, that no privacy can hid them from the eye of God; he sees into their most secret sentiments, no darkness can conceal them from his presence, nor are any of their actions too trivial for his knowledge. And if they set by the fire, or window, or do any thing how insignificant soever, which they know they ought *not* to do, they may be assured that

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by so acting, they not only are guilty of disobedience to their friends, but likewise are guilty of great wickedness and sin against *God*. Nor will their *youth* (as some are foolishly apt to imagine) be any excuse for their crime; for when once they are old enough to understand what is said to them, and to know right from wrong, they certainly are old enough to be punished for their offences; and unless they shew their repentance by forsaking all such crimes, the Almighty, though very merciful, will some time or other punish them for their sins. How ridiculous therefore it is, for the sake of such trivial enjoyments, not only to run the chance of losing all the confidence of their friends, and the peace and innocence of their own minds; but also to forfeit the favor of the kindest and best of Beings, who hath given them their life, and breath, and all things they at present enjoy; and promised, if they will but behave well, he will in another world give them infinitely more happiness than can even be *conceived* in this. But then they should observe, that such felicity is not to be our portion, unless we on our parts are careful to fulfil his will, by a diligent discharge of all our several duties; which, if we perform as we ought, he will graciously look upon as obedience to himself, though at the same time it was necessary to our own comfort upon earth. Thus, though good-

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humour and cheerfulness are absolutely requisite to make us pleasing to mankind, or happy to ourselves, yet so very kind is our God, that he will not only let us enjoy the comfort of such disposition in this life, but also *reward* us for it hereafter. So likewise obedience to our parents will not only insure *their* love and affection here, but also be recompenced as a virtue in the life which is to come. And what encouragement, my *Harriot*, is this to make us persevere in our respective duties, whatever difficulties we may have to encounter? What a comfort amidst the severest afflictions to know, that if we are but careful to perform our own parts *well*, God will shortly make good his promises, and confer such felicity upon us, as shall repay ten thousand-fold all the unhappiness we may at present suffer! And who that considers these truths as they ought, would hesitate a moment to gain the love of so good, so powerful a God? What wise person would delay to gain that Being for a *friend*, whose favour is better than life? You, my dear child, are blessed with an understanding to see the propriety of at *all* times doing your duty, and if ever you are guilty of a fault, the error lays not in your *heart*, but in your *judgment*, which alone waits to be made sensible of its mistake before it with pleasure returns to its duty. Young as you are, you already experience the supreme happiness of an approving conscience,

conscience, and believe me, my love, no joys on this side heaven, can ever recompence the loss of it. *True happiness* is not to be found on earth, but the peaceful serenity of a good heart makes the nearest approaches to it that can be experienced in this life. What think you are all the joys of *riches* and *grandeur*, all the bustle of *amusement*, or hurry of *pleasure*, when compared with that internal *peace* of *mind* resulting from the consciousness of having done your duty, and gained the approbation of the Almighty? In the day of adversity, on the bed of sickness, and in the decline of life, *riches* and *diversions* can afford no *pleasure*: incapacitated to partake of their charms, they cannot afford the smallest comfort. Whereas, the reflection on a life *well* spent, the thought of having from childhood made *God* our friend, and the assurance, that let death approach what time it may, it will only introduce us to glory; such reflections as these afford consolations amidst the severest affliction, support under the pains of sickness, and give patience to sustain the various infirmities of age. That such reflections as these, my love, may at all times be the inhabitants of your bosom, and that through the grace of God you may resolutely persevere in the narrow path of duty, so that you may be equally prepared for a long life, or an early death, is the fervent

prayer of her, who with the sincerest affection is happy in subscribing herself,

Your warmest Friend and Aunt,

MARTHA BARTLATE.

L E T T E R XLIV.

Mrs. BARTLATE to Miss SEAMORE.

I HAVE just been, my dear *Harriot*, again reading over your last letter, for I assure you I value them so highly, that I frequently give myself that pleasure; though perhaps by my wholly omitting in my last the subject you desired me to treat upon, you may be led to think I do not read them at all. I acknowledge it was rather uncivil to make no reply to your enquiry relating to *friendship*; but the high compliments you were pleased to pay my advice; so wholly employed my attention, that I really forgot the more material part of your letter, till after I had run mine to a greater length than would admit of a new subject. I therefore thought it would be best to conclude that, and without waiting for another from you, begin a second the very first opportunity. I could not help smiling at the ac-

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count you give of Miss *Clack's* proof of friendship, as if she supposed it consisted in telling of *secrets* ; though indeed in that thought, she is not singular, as it is the foolish idea many girls have formed of it, and imagine, that a *friend* is to be distinguished from all other play-fellows, by being intrusted with circumstances *they* must be kept ignorant of. But a more ridiculous notion never entered into the mind: as if *love* and *affection* could be expressed alone by *secrets* ; for if this was the case, the best and most worthy children could never have a friend at all; since they will always acquaint their parents with every thing they know; and if doing so is contrary to friendship, I am sure it must be a very bad connection ever to be made by young folks. But this, my dear, is far from being the case, and a *true* friend is one of the greatest blessings that can be enjoyed on earth: this I say from experience; for from my childhood the society and counsel of Mrs. *Peace*, has ever formed one of the chief happinesses of my life, and to her advice and example I in a great measure owe those few accomplishments I possess. I will endeavour to tell you in what manner she always acted towards me, and in her behaviour you may discover a proper example for your own conduct, as well as learn what sort of a girl you should chuse for a friend. Your mamma, you know, is five years

younger than myself, which though when grown up makes no disparity in the conversation of women, yet in children is a prodigious difference indeed; and I fancy you will readily allow, that to a girl of seven or eight years old, one of only two or three, can be but an indifferent *companion*; though you may be excessively fond of her as a *little child*. Such then was my case. At seven years old, I had scarce any play-fellows but your mamma, who was much too young either to enter into conversation, or engage in any of the sports which gave me entertainment. I loved her with the sincerest affection, and would have done, or suffered any thing to give her pleasure; but still I wished for a companion nearer to my own age; one, who by being my *equal* could better enter into my sentiments, and join with me in play. Amongst the few young acquaintance who visited me when *their* mammas came to see *mine*, I found none whom I could much approve, or for whom I felt any tender regard. Happy in being taught (like yourself) to abhor every thing *mean* or ungenerous, I found none who did not in some instance or other shock my conscience. One I remember gave me some plums, which she afterwards told me she took *slily* out of the closet, when her mamma sent her to fetch some tea. Another offered me a lump of chocolate which she had obtained in the same under-hand manner. A

third

third I saw practice some little unjust arts to insure her winning at cards. And one I remember gave me a bad opinion of her, by bolting the door whilst she undressed her doll, for fear any body should come and see her about it, as her mamma had told her not. These, and such kind of *meannesses* which I discovered in most of my play-fellows (who passed when in company for tolerable good girls) kept me from forming an intimacy with any; and though I liked well enough sometimes to spend an afternoon with them, yet I found no inclination to grow very fond of them, though one or two professed to be vastly so of me. At last Mr. *Normand* (Mrs. *Peace's* father) took a house which happened to be empty in the neighbourhood, and with inexpressible pleasure I found in his daughter of my own age, a girl with whom I might spend my time, without endangering my morals. As their house was very near ours, we had an opportunity of being frequently together, and from the first time of our meeting, I never saw any one instance in her conduct like that I have mentioned observing in others. On the contrary, her behaviour was open and generous; conscious of committing no evil, she had no desire that her actions should be concealed from her parents; she justly considered them as her best of friends, and was certain what *they* disapproved could not be proper

per for her to do; therefore never attempted to practice those things when out of their sight, which she would not have done in their presence. Such conduct as this delighted me. I told my mamma the manner in which she behaved, and she approved of her as a play-fellow for me: her parents likewise were pleased not to object to me as her companion, and we were both happy in each other's society, though it was not till after a *very* long acquaintance and a thorough knowledge of each other's temper and disposition, that we made professions of any thing more than play-fellows, or supposed ourselves worthy of the sacred name of *friends*. *True friendship* can arise from nothing but a mutual esteem and love for each other. And *esteem* and *love* can arise from nothing but a knowledge of good qualities possessed, which is impossible to be thoroughly known upon only a short acquaintance. Those girls therefore, who profess themselves the bosom friend of every new companion who happens to please them for a time, evidently prove that they understand not the *meaning* of the term. And as much mistaken are those, who fancy *friendship* consists in telling or keeping of *secrets*; or doing any thing to promote the *pleasure* or *ease* of our companions, which is *wrong* or *improper* to be done. For, on the contrary, a *friend* who is deserving of the name, will always endeavour to
make

us happy by convincing us of our duty ; and if they see us doing those things we ought not, they will sooner run the risk of offending us, than suffer us to fall into any error it is in their power to prevent. On this foundation was my friendship with Mrs. *Peace* erected. And we made it a rule always to tell one another of any thing we saw wrong in each other's conduct, and by every means in our power to endeavour to improve, and be of real service to each other: this we thought would be shewing much greater affection, than foolishly, like some children, calling one another *dear friend*, and tender names, supposing we proved our love by that ridiculous method of telling *secrets*, when in fact there were none to tell. I will not pretend to say that it may not so happen, as upon some occasion to wish to conceal from *others*, what to our *intimate* we like to have known. But in such a case, would any person of common *politeness* chuse the time of revealing it to be when in company with others? Miss *Clack* no doubt chose the opportunity when you was there, of whispering Miss *Langish*, for the sake of *displaying* her *friendship*, but in my opinion she gave no proof of *that*, though a very great one of *ill-manners* and *rudeness*. You say you are really fond of Miss *Right*, and wish to behave properly towards her. I am sincerely glad, that of your acquaintance, she is
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the one you feel yourself the most attached to ; since what I have seen and heard of her conduct, inclines me to believe she is every way worthy of your regard. If she is, my love, she will value you the more for your sincerity. On no account, therefore, from a wrong notion of politeness, ever pass over in silence any thing you may discover wrong in her temper or manners. If the opinion I have formed of her is just, she will be thankful, and love you the better for the freedom ; but if she should be *angry* and *resent* it, it is a convincing proof she is not deserving of being esteemed your *friend*. But whilst I thus wish to encourage you with freedom to point out *her* failings ; I would be understood at the same time, to recommend you to listen with attention to the admonitions *she* may think proper to give *you* ; for the sincerity on both sides *must* be mutual ; nor must either party, if they wish to promote each other's happiness, ever be offended at the freedom. No quarrellings and girlish bickerings must ever be admitted between *friends*. And on this head I may again venture to propose Mrs. *Peace* and myself for an example, as I can truly say, that from the hour of our first meeting at seven years old to the present moment, we have never had the smallest disagreement. Even in our childish sports *affection* and *politeness* so far over-ruled our hearts, and directed our conduct,

dust, that we mutually gave way to each other's
 fancy, nor ever harboured in our bosoms one
 moment's discord. But though no fault in your
 friend must pass by unnoticed, yet must you be
 careful to reprove with the greatest gentleness,
 good-humour, and civility, otherwise it will appear
 as if you found fault, not so much for her good,
 as for the pleasure you enjoyed in reproof. In
 any thing in which you think your duty to God, or
 your parents is concerned, upon no consideration
 whatever, let your love to your friend tempt you
 to transgress; for be assured, you had better
 offend her, than make God angry with you, or
 give your parents cause to be displeased. If at
 any time, either through ignorance, or want of
 duly reflecting on the subject, she should want to
 persuade you to what is *wrong*, do you before
 resolutely to refuse complying with such wishes,
 and seriously tell her, as Mrs. *Peace* once did me,
 when I very wickedly wanted her to stay and
 play with me instead of going to church, " No,
 my dear *Martha*, said she, that I cannot consent
 to, as it would be highly improper: nor will I,
 because I *love* you, do any thing that is *wrong*
 to give you pleasure: as far as my *duty* will
 permit, I will do *any* thing to oblige you; but
 if you wish me to do what is contrary to that,
 I must and will refuse you; since though I love

you

you most sincerely, it is my duty to love God still better, and what he commands it is right should be obeyed. Excuse me therefore, my dear, for not complying with your request, and when you come to reflect upon it, I am sure you will be both *ashamed*, and *sorry* that you made it." How much wiser, how much more like a *friend* was such conduct, than if through civility or fear of offending me, she had consented to my proposal, which I foolishly made without thinking of the impropriety of it; though when she had thus awakened me to a sense of what was right, did indeed, as she said, cover me with shame and confusion. Let such, my dear girl, be your conduct, if ever Heaven should bless you with a companion deserving the name of a *friend*; for be assured no one can ever be so, who would either wish you to do what is improper yourself, or not gladly receive that advice which would convince *them* of their error. *Friendship* to be durable must be founded on *virtue* as well as *affection*. For without *virtue*, let people boast of their *love* and *friendship* ever so loudly, it is very evident they are ignorant of all but the *name*. That your life, my dear girl, in most circumstances may be happier than your aunt's has hitherto been, is my most ardent prayer; but that in a *friend*, it may be *equally* so,

is the highest worldly blessing in the power of her to wish, who is with the utmost sincerity,

Your very affectionate Aunt,

MARTHA BARTLATE.

DIALOGUE VIII.

GRAND-MAMMA and HARRIOT.

GRAND-MAMMA.

WHERE have you been my dear ? I was almost afraid you was lost. I have hunted the whole house for you, but could not find you ; and I walked down the garden to seek after you, but you was fled : I hope you have not been out by yourself ?

HARRIOT. No, Ma'am, I have not been alone, Mrs. and Miss *Bently* were with me ; or, more properly speaking, I was with them. I was standing at the window when they went by, and Mrs. *Bently* asked me if I would take a walk with them ? So I came down stairs to ask your leave ; but as I could not find you in the parlour, and I thought it would not be right to keep Mrs.

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Bently

Bently waiting, I went with her; but I hope, Ma'am, you have not been uneasy about me?

GRAND-MAMMA. Why, to tell you the truth, I did begin to wonder a good deal where you could be; and had you not returned when you did, should have been alarmed, and thought you was lost; but don't go again, my love, without leaving word (at least) with some of the servants if I am not in the way.

HARRIOT. I will not, Ma'am; and am sorry I have been now, if it has given you the smallest uneasiness.

GRAND-MAMMA. Never mind it, my love; the walk I hope has done you good. I like young folks should use exercise: it is proper for their healths, and makes them strong, and gives them spirits. When I was young I used to be vastly fond of walking; and it was well for me that I was, for as I was one of the youngest of the family, (which was pretty numerous) it seldom came to my share to ride in the coach, so that if I had not walked I must have been contented to have staid at home. Our house was above two miles distant from the church, and I used constantly to go twice every *Sunday*. And I think eight miles walking was pretty well for one day.

HARRIOT. Pray, what did you do, Ma'am, when it was bad and dirty weather? and when it

was

was very hot? Such a long walk must have been very disagreeable!

GRAND-MAMMA. O ! I never minded the weather : when it was wet and cold, I put on a long cardinal, which reached down to my feet ; and as for the dirt, I put on a pair of pattens, and trotted through it ; and in summer time, instead of my long cloak, I had a gauze shade. And I was always fond of warm weather, so I never found that disagreeable

HARRIOT. Pray, Ma'am, how many brothers and sisters had you ? I have heard before, but I have forgot.

GRAND-MAMMA. There were fourteen of us altogether, living at the same time ; seven older, and six younger than myself ; the four eldest were girls, the three next boys, then came I, and my sister *Susan* ; then four more boys, and the youngest of all was a girl. And altogether a fine racket we used to make I assure you. I am sure I often think, what a shocking time my poor mother must have had with us all making a noise about her ears ; and she had but indifferent health neither : but we children did not think about that ; and if we could but get to play, never considered how much noise we made, or what mischief we did ; and to be sure we did a good deal. My brother *John* was a sad boy for mischief, he never considered the consequence of things, and for

the sake of a *joke*, would do any thing that came into his head. I am sure one day his *fun*, as he called it, very near was the death of a man. The wine cellar in our house was under the beer cellar, and the way into it was through a little trap-door. My father always kept the key of it himself, and generally fetched up his own wine; but one day (I forget what was the reason) but he did not chuse to go, and gave the key to my brother *John*, telling him to fetch the wine. *John* took the key, and very gravely walked out of the room, went into the cellar and fetched the wine, which he put down by the outside of the parlour door: then he went into kitchen, and very soberly asked *Ralph* the footman to give him a candle, and be so good as to come with him, and bring up the wine. *Ralph* immediately lit one, and taking it in his hand, followed my brother into the beer cellar. *John* then unlocked the trap-door, and appeared to be going down, then stepping up again he said, "Perhaps I shall do some mischief amongst the bottles *you* had better go down, *Ralph*, and I will stand here and light you." So *Ralph* gave him the candle, and went down the steps: but no sooner had he got to the bottom, than my brother shut the door, locked it, and returned into the parlour very demurely with the wine, and gave the key again to my father, who put it into his pocket, and soon afterwards

terwards went out to supper. As soon as my father, mother, and eldest sister were gone, we all got to romping about, and making such a noise that it was impossible for the voice of poor *Ralph*, locked up under ground, to be heard by any body. Whether *John* did really forget him or not, I can't tell you, but he took no notice of him, and went to bed at night without saying a word about him. He had been ordered to attend the carriage after supper, to fetch home my father and mother; but he could no where be found. As he was a very sober good sort of a man, it was strange he was out of the way when he knew he should be wanted, and still stranger, that he did not return all night.

HARRIOT. And pray, Ma'am, how did he get out at last?

GRAND-MAMMA. I will tell you, my love. The next morning, when the coachman went down into the cellar, to draw some beer for his breakfast, he thought he heard a noise in the wine-vault, and told my father he was afraid the dog was locked up in it, for he heard something moving. So my father took a candle, and went directly to see what it was, when who should he find but poor *Ralph*, tired to pieces as you may suppose, at his lodging. He was very good-natured, and did not often tell tales; but when my father enquired how he got there, he was obliged

to tell the truth, and poor *John* was severely punished for it. And most justly did he deserve it : to think of locking up a poor man for so many hours in such a place as that, was very wrong and inconsiderate. It cannot be expected that boys should always be quiet, and not play and make a noise ; but to let their tricks be at the expence of other peoples comfort is very naughty indeed. As my father used to say, “ As long boys as your sports are innocent, I will not prevent them ; but if they are cruel either to man or beast, you shall be punished severely yourselves.” And indeed I think he was much in the right, not only to *say* so, but also to *do* so. He was very kind and indulgent to good children ; but if ever he discovered any *wickedness*, he punished it with the utmost severity. However my brother might think this trick only a *frolick*, *Ralph* very near lost his life by it, for he caught a most violent cold, and was confined to his bed with a rheumatic fever for above a month, which was no *joke* to him. People should always consider the *consequences* of their actions, and not do the first foolish thing that comes into their heads without reflection, like brutes who have no understanding, otherwise they may be guilty of the greatest mischiefs ; as a boy I once knew killed his sister only in *joke*, and by way of play. She had clambered off a chair on to a table ; and just as she was
going

going to get down again, stepping backwards into the chair, he took it away for the sake of surprizing her by the fall. But, poor girl, it was no play to her, for she came down with such a force, as broke something within her, and after living a week in the most violent pain, died in the greatest agonies.

HARRIOT. Pray, Ma'am, was not her brother much distressed, to think he had been the cause of her death?

GRAND-MAMMA. Indeed he was, but that did not bring her to life again. Children should therefore think of such things, and as Dr. *Watts* says, be very careful that

“ *Not a thing that they do, not a word that they say,*

“ *Should injure another, in jest or in play,*

“ *For he's still in earnest that's hurt.*”

HARRIOT. Pray be so kind, Ma'am, as to tell me some more about your brothers and sisters, and what you did when you were young; for I like to hear it much.

GRAND-MAMMA. I am very glad to be able to entertain you, my dear; and if it does, I can tell you fifty frolicks we used to play; but I believe we must defer it till another opportunity, as it grows pretty near dinner, and if I don't go up stairs, I shall not have time to put my cap on, and I like to be dressed before dinner. I have
always

always been used to it, for that was one of the things my mother insisted upon; and if we were not ready to come down when dinner was upon table, she made us go without. And so good morning to you Miss *Harriot*, for if I don't go, I am sure I shall not be ready to-day.

DIALOGUE IX.

GRAND-MAMMA and HARRIOT.

HARRIOT.

NOW, Ma'am, have you leisure to tell me some more histories? But first of all, do pray be so kind as to tell me all their names, for I cannot recollect them.

GRAND-MAMMA. Well, my dear, I will indeed be kind enough to do that; but you must keep account, or you will not know when you have heard all; first there was *Jane*, then *Bridget*, then *Mary* and *Sarah*, *Thomas*, *Jacob*, and *John*, then myself (*Martha* by name) and *Susan*, then *Joseph* and *James*, *Peter* and *Phillip*, and last of all came *Ann*. And, upon my word, I think it is pretty well for an old woman to be able to remember such a tribe. But you want some stories of mischief I think you say? Well, I will tell you
some

some then if I have not forgot. One day we were going to have some company to dinner, and one of them was remarkably nice and particular about his food, and unless every thing was dressed quite as it ought to be, he could not eat a mouthful. As soon as my brothers knew he was coming, they thought how they should contrive to play him some trick; and they happened to hear my mother give orders for the dinner, part of which was to be a pigeon pie, and some beef soup. So it came into their heads to watch an opportunity, when the pie was made, before it went into the oven, to lift up the crust, take out the pigeons, and instead of them, fill up the dish with their feathers, heads, and guts, which they had got possession of for that purpose. This they knew would be a great mortification to Mr. *Brumpton*, as he was very fond of pigeon pie; but not contented with this, they contrived, when the cook's back was turned, to pop one of my father's old wigs into the soup, which was boiling on the fire, and then they took themselves out of the way as fast as they could.

HARRIOT. But pray, Ma'am, how came they to be in the kitchen? was that a proper place for them?

GRAND-MAMMA. No, my dear, I cannot say it was, and they were ordered never to go there, but I promise you we were not all such good

good children as you are, for we often did those things we were bid not, at least the boys did, and I must say the girls too sometimes. Well! but I was telling you about the dinner, and when it was ready to be taken up, and the soup was to be poured out, what should come first but the old wig. I am sure I never shall forget how the cook stared whilst she held it smoaking and dripping upon a fork. Now don't think because I was in the kitchen at the time of the wig's being taken up that I was a naughty girl, for in those days young ladies used to be taught to cook, and my mother liked we *girls* should see and know a little how things were done; and I very well remember I was then standing to see some scallopped oysters grilled with a salamander. But the sight of the wig took up my attention for the rest of the time, and I laughed most heartily, as every one else did except the cook, who scolded and grumbled sadly, and put herself in a passion with our laughing, that she almost killed one of the maids, who so provoked her by laughing at, instead of helping her, that she clapped the wig all scalding hot as it was on her head; and the hot soup ran down her face and neck, and made her very bad indeed, she nigh lost the sight of one of her eyes by it. The soup however could not be sent to table, and there was nothing to supply its place,

and

and so the poor middle dish was last; but the pie made a very handsome appearance in its proper place; and it was not long before Mr. *Brumpton* chose a piece of it, saying at the same time, "I shall make my dinner upon this excellent dish." As soon as it was cut, my father and mother looked with no less amazement at the feathers, than the cook had before at the wig; nor could I, who had just been a witness to that, keep my countenance at the sight of it, but burst out a laughing; which to be sure was extremely rude, only it was so strange to see two such dishes provided for dinner, that I really could not help it. Upon my laughing, my brothers, who had done it, could no longer keep their grave faces, but joined with me, so they and I were all sent from table, and my father declared we should have nothing unless we chose to eat the *feathers*, which he said he had a great mind to cram down our throats, (for by my laughing they thought I was one of the party.) Poor Mr. *Brumpton*, my sisters told us, was sadly disappointed, and did not chuse to eat much more of any thing, for fear, he said, the boys might have played some prank with every dish. The next day my father and mother read my brothers a long lecture for being so foolish to spoil the the victuals; but I very well remember my father seemed to think Mr. *Brumpton* was more to blame

blame than the boys were, for being so ridiculously dainty about his food, for he finished his speech with saying, " See how people subject themselves to contempt and ridicule by being so foolish ; I hope, after laughing at it yourselves children, you will never be guilty of such particularities in your conduct." And now, Miss *Harriot*, there is an end of my story.

HARRIOT. I am much obliged to you, Ma'am, but I hope you will recollect some more, for I think it vastly entertaining, don't you, Ma'am?

GRAND-MAMMA. If it entertains *you*, my love, it is sufficient. I was entertained enough, I dare say, at the time. I will tell you another pretty frolick they did, for which my father was very angry indeed. Our best parlour was hung all round with family pictures, in very handsome oval frames. There were above a dozen all together men and women, aye, I really believe there were not much fewer than twenty. My father was very fond of them, and took great delight at looking at them, for they were mostly his relations, and he said very good likenesses they were. I remember my grandmother was dressed in black velvet, and her hair hung in flowing curls over her shoulders ; and my grand-father was in snuff-colour and gold, and a green velvet waistcoat, embroidered with gold. And what did those two mischief lovers, *Jacob* and *John* do, but one day entertain themselves
with

with defacing and spoiling all the pictures. In my grand-father's mouth they made a hole, and stuck a tobacco-pipe, and made a great blot of ink to look like a plaister over one of his eyes. My grand-mother they quite disfigured, for after cutting off her head, and also one of my uncles, they sewed them upon the wrong bodies; others they took from out of the frames, and put them in wrong side outwards; and of some they cut out the eyes, and left them the ugliest figures in the world; whilst others they smeared all over with different coloured paints, so that altogether they were totally spoiled: one man I very well remember, they cut all the way up the middle, and rolled his two feet into his mouth.

HARRIOT. They must have looked very droll. Pray, Ma'am, what did your father say about it?

GRAND-MAMMA. O! I cannot tell you half what he said, but I know he was very angry; (as well he might be) and he tied *Jacob* and *John's* four hands altogether behind them, and so made them remain all day; and if I remember right, he horse whipped them before he tied their hands. Upon my word it was a very provoking piece of mischief, because it was impossible ever to be repaired again, as most of the originals were dead; and as they were strong likenesses, my father and mother had a great value for them, and would not have parted

with them for any money. I don't know that ever I saw my father so much disconcerted about any thing we did; and to the day of his death he always lamented it as an irreparable loss.

HARRIOT. I am sure my papa and mamma would have been very angry, because it was such downright mischief, without any *use* at all in it. I think it was very provoking. If I had pictures of my father, and mother, and aunt, I should be much vexed to have them spoiled, especially if they were dead, and I could never get any more.

GRAND-MAMMA. Ah! it was a sad naughty affair indeed, my dear, and I don't think any of you would be guilty of it; but poor *John* did love mischief at his heart; he was a good-natured boy too; I was vastly fond of him, and so was he of me; indeed we were all very fond of one another, except of my sister *Bridget*; and we none of us loved her much, she was so intolerable cross and severe with us young ones. My mother, as I told you, had but indifferent health, and was often confined to her room, so that the three eldest girls had a good deal of the care of us, and they taught us to work and read; but *Bridget* was a severe mistress, and made all her scholars tremble at her presence: she was a woman of prodigious spirits, and used to trim us about if we did not mind

her

her. She was very clever to be sure, and worked vastly neat, and read remarkably well; but she was very cross, and thumped us sadly when we did wrong; so that in short, we all *feared*, and none of us *loved* her. I remember one time she whipped me sadly for tearing one of her best cambrick aprons: to speak the truth, I believe I deserved it; for instead of unpicking the binding as she desired me, I cut two or three of the stitches, and then pulled it, holding the apron in one hand and the tape in the other, so that at last I tore it almost in two. She was very angry, and did whip me most heartily, and told my mother, who said she had served me quite right. But now, my dear *Harriot*, you must go to-bed, for it is past your time, and we must not sit gossiping all night.

HARRIOT. It is time I should go, I will wish you good night, Ma'am; but I should like to sit and hear you talk about old stories when you was young for an hour longer.

LETTER XLV.

MISS SEAMORE TO MRS. BARTLATE.

HONORED MADAM,

I LIKE being at my grand-mamma's very much, but I hear I am soon to return home,

for she had a letter from my mamma yesterday, which says, she cannot do without me much longer ; and if my grand-mamma don't carry me home before, she shall fetch me by the first of next month. You say it is *impossible*, therefore I need not wish any more about it, but I think it would be very comfortable if we *could* all live *close* together, (if not in the same house;) but if we did, I should hope you would write letters to me, that I might make a book of them as I do now ; and be able to read over your good advice, and not so soon forget it as if you only told it me. I am glad you like Miss *Right* ; indeed I believe she is a very good girl, and I am sure she is very agreeable, and my mamma likes I should play with her. I hope we shall be of as much service to each other as you and Mrs. *Peace* have been ; for though you don't say so, I dare say you have contributed to her happiness as much as she has to yours. — Mrs. and Miss *Bently* have been to see us since I wrote to you, and I have walked with them, and met them at Mr. *Shepherd's*, and have had a great deal of talk with Miss *Bently*. She seems very good-natured girl, and says she is convinced of the naughtiness of doing what she ought not when out of sight. I read her both your last letters : she thinks them extremely pretty and true, and promised me she would try and re-
member

member, and never for the future do wrong because she was out of her papas and mamma's sight. You cannot think how much pleasure it gave me when she said so, and I felt so *glad* that I had talked to her about it, and been able to convince her of the badness of doing so, it made me quite *comfortable*. We were very merry the other night at Mr. *Shepherd's*; there were seven of his grand-children there, and Miss *Bently*, and a Miss *Twist*, and Miss *Cross*, (I am glad that it is not my name, for I should be afraid every body would think I was cross and bad-tempered :) I wish her name had not been so, for she appeared good humoured, and yet I could not help thinking about it. And there was a Miss and Master *Boxford*, and two Miss *Keplows*. We danced and played at blindman's-buff, and forfeits, and were very merry. Mr. *Shepherd* came into the room to us for some time, and sung several songs: he took off his wig, (at least one of his grand-sons pulled it off) and tied a handkerchief round his eyes, and he played with us at blindman's-buff. What an agreeable man he is! I never saw any old man I liked so well in all my life. My grand-mamma came for a little while, and she and Mr. *Shepherd* danced a minuet together. I wish you had been with us, for I am sure you never did see any thing so droll as they looked. They did not do one single step

right, and held their arms so strange, and made such comical curtesies and bows we none of us could help laughing most heartily indeed. I really don't believe Mr. *Shepherd* ever learnt to dance in his life, if he had it would be impossible he could so much forget it: and indeed my grand-mamma did not perform much better. And when they had finished, Mr. *Shepherd* handed her to the door, where they made a *low* bow and a curtesy hand-in-hand, and then went out of the room. But our mirth was a little spoiled before we parted, for as we were at play at Puss-in-the-Corner, and were all running about together, one of the Miss *Keptlows* caught her frock upon a pin in somebody's cloaths, and tore such a terrible great hole you might run your hand through it. As soon as she saw it she burst out a crying. We all of us told her not to mind it, and as it was an accident not to grieve about it, but return to play again. That she said she could not do, neither could she *help minding* it, as it was her best frock, and her mamma would be so exceedingly angry with her. I told her she need not be afraid of that, as it was not done on *purpose*, and she had not been guilty of any *fault*, and could not *help* it. That, she said, did not signify, for her mamma would not believe it was not owing to her carelessness, and would punish her for it, though she could not help

help it, to make her take more care another time. Yes, that she will, said her sister, I am sure she whipped me once for greasing my coat when I could no more help it than any of you could. What whip you! said I, when you was not in fault? I never heard of such a thing. I am sure I was not a *bit* in fault, replied Miss *Keptlow*, I was upon a visit at my uncle's, and one time at dinner as the servant was bringing a boat full of gravy, some how or other he hit his hand against the back of the chair, and poured it down my coat; and for all I told my mamma so, and so did my uncle and aunt too, when I went home she was very angry, and whipped me for it. Why then, said I, you are much to be pitied for having such a simple mamma that don't know how to manage better, for I am sure you ought not to be punished when you are *not* in fault. No nor when you are either, said Miss *Twist*, no parent *ought* to beat their child; and if my mamma was to *dare* to strike me, I should *hit* her again, I can promise you. We were all quite astonished to hear her say so; for though we agreed no parent had a right to punish a child who had not been naughty, yet to talk in such a manner we every one of us thought very wicked, and so I dare say, Ma'am, you will. We talked about these subjects for some time, and at nine o'clock my grand-mam-

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ma sent me home. I wished much to stay longer, but as I thought she had a *right* to manage me as she pleased, I went directly; and what became of poor Miss *Keptlow* I have not since heard. But if her mamma was angry with her, I am sure she deserves to be punished herself; for indeed she could not help tearing her frock; it was quite an accident, and nobody was to blame at all. I am sure I am glad I have not such a mother; if I had, I could not love her: neither if my aunt was like her, could I take such pleasure in so frequently subscribing myself,

Her affectionate and dutiful Niece,

HARRIOT SEAMORE.

L E T T E R XLVI.

Mrs. BARTLATE to Miss SEAMORE.

WHAT a happy girl must be my *Harriot*, to have her company so much desired by all her friends. May she ever continue deserving of their tenderest love, and repay by her dutiful regard all that care and attention they bestow upon her. I can perfectly well enter
into

into your feelings, upon having convinced Miss *Bently* of her great error in wishing to behave differently when out of the observation of her friends to that she did in their presence. The thought of having in *any* degree been of service to a person, is most pleasing to a benevolent mind; but the idea of having been instrumental in leading them to *virtue* is beyond any transient pleasure the world can bestow, and I hope the satisfaction you felt upon the occasion will induce you at *all* times resolutely to set a good example; and if opportunity offers, endeavour to persuade others to follow it. I was much pleased with the description you gave of your evening's entertainment at Mr. *Shepherd's*, and should highly have enjoyed seeing him and your grand-mamma dance their minuet. I doubt not to your *modern* eyes, they must indeed appear as if they had never learnt; but so far is that from the case with regard to my mother, that she not only was a remarkable good dancer herself, but also took great pains in that article with her daughters, nor had we any other instructor for many years. Mr. *Shepherd* too, in private parties I have frequently seen acquit himself very genteelly; but those kind of accomplishments, my love, seldom appear to much advantage after the grace and vivacity of youth are fled, which should keep us (however we may excel in them for a
few

few years) from setting too much value upon, or esteeming ourselves much higher for possessing them. Not that I would be understood to depreciate their importance, as if I thought them of no consequence; for on the contrary, I think it highly necessary for every young person to acquire as much as possible all those little exterior graces, which contribute so much towards making them amiable in conversation. To endeavour to please those with whom we are connected is a most laudable pursuit, and worthy the attention of all. And nothing but observation and knowledge of the world can convince one, how very far the *manner* and *outward* behaviour of a person goes towards gaining the love and approbation of mankind. To put on an *hypocritical* appearance of *love* and *affection* where you feel it not, is a degree of *wile meanness* which every honest bosom must detest and abhor. But to win the approbation of all by a *polite* and *easy* behaviour, is no ways repugnant either to sincerity or duty. On the contrary, when by so doing, we can render ourselves more universally admired, and thereby our *virtues* more esteemed, it becomes our duty to cultivate those methods which shall be most attended with such good effects. And for this reason it is, I so anxiously wish you to excel in all those accomplishments you are at present learning. The world, my dear girl, is too much taken

by

by *outward* appearance, and generally bestows its approbation and its frown as that alone directs. Now though I would not for this reason give up *one* duty, or comply with even the appearance of *one* vice to secure its smile; yet, so far as that may be purchased with perfect innocence, so far I would endeavour to gain it. And you cannot imagine how far more brilliant the *virtues* appear when attended by the *graces*, than when left destitute and alone. In the one case *all* ranks and conditions will admire them: in the other they will be disregarded but by the wise and discerning *few*. But since after our utmost care, old age will destroy and obliterate those *exterior* graces which in youth appeared so engaging, with what diligence ought we to cultivate that *good humour* and *sweetness* of *manners* which will over-balance every deformity, and make our conversation still please, when every beauty and grace has forsaken us. The company of old people is generally found far from agreeable to the young and lively; but the reason is, because in the days of their youth they were not enough careful to acquire that goodness of temper, which alone can make them pleasing in the decline of life; and unless whilst young, and in health and spirits, people conquer their own inclinations, and learn to conform to the will of others, they may depend upon it, that when grown old, and
labouring

labouring under all those pains and infirmities which constantly attend that state, it will then be too late to improve the temper. Good humour, to be of any value, must be a *settled* disposition of the mind, and not only a sudden start, which discovers itself alone upon particular occasions, or when it happens to be pleased. The most sour and morose person upon earth, when nothing contradicts his fancy, will sometimes be calm and good-humoured; but *such* good-humour, is the effect only of perfect ease, and liable to be blown away upon the first disappointment or contradiction; is not worthy of the smallest regard, or deserving being esteemed as a *virtue*. Whereas, those persons who maintain a constant sweetness of temper, not only when events conspire to please, but also when things happen cross and vexatious, are certainly worthy of great applause. Nor by a God of kindness will their endeavours to promote the peace and happiness of their fellow creature be forgotten, or lose its reward. I can very well fancy Mr. *Shepherd's* playing at blindman's buff with you: many a time has he joined the sports of his sons, and your mamma, and myself, when we were young; and so cheerful and good-humoured was he, that his presence always heightened instead of restrained our pleasures. Happy are those children who are blessed with such indulgent

gent parents, who though too *good* to suffer them ever to do any thing wrong, at the same time are too kind to debar them from any innocent pleasure in their power to grant. Poor Miss *Keptlow's*! by the account you give of them, I think they are much to be pitied. To be punished when guilty of no crime, is indeed very hard and provoking; and indeed I agree with you in thinking their mother much to blame for such proceeding. But my love, though we do not approve of her method, and you are happy enough to be blessed with a father* and mother who discover more sense, as well as greater justice in their way of management, still, you certainly was much to blame to speak in the disrespectful manner you did of Mrs. *Keptlow* to her daughters. You should have considered, my dear, that though she might be severe, still she was their mother, and as such entitled to their respect and obedience. Instead, therefore, of exclaiming against her folly and absurdity, it would have been a far higher proof of wisdom if you had endeavoured to reconcile them to their fate, by considering things in the best point of view. Thus when one of them told you the affair of her coat's being spoiled, instead of exclaiming that they were *much to be pitied for having such a simple mother, who did not better know how to manage*, you should have told her, that though to her it might be *extremely*

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provoking

provoking to be punished when she knew herself innocent, yet to her mamma it appeared otherwise, or she certainly would not have corrected her. And in the instance of tearing her frock, though Miss *Keptlow* might not do it for the *purpose*, still she was undoubtedly playing and running about, and perhaps her mamma might not like such kind of play, because it is always likely to occasion such accidents. And cloaths cost a great deal of money, which children are seldom apt to think of, though their parents may find it very necessary to make them as careful of them as possible. Thus perhaps if you knew all the circumstances, and how much Mrs. *Keptlow* may have desired her daughters not to engage in those sports which are likely to tear and dirt their cloaths, you might find she was not so much to blame. There is an old saying you know, that "One party always make their cause appear good till the other is heard:" That is, there are many little circumstances, that may render a person blameable, which by being omitted to be told, will make it appear as if they were perfectly innocent, and the fault on the other side. But let the other person tell his story, and the case will be found greatly different, and the blame may then justly fall on those who at first seemed perfect. Thus was Mrs. *Keptlow* to relate the affair of whipping her child, she might perhaps

perhaps shew very clearly, that she deserved it. She might allow that she could not help the *accident*, but that she behaved saucily when spoke to about it, and *that* was the cause for which she punished her. But at any rate, my love, and let the affair be as it would, you should have endeavoured to have excused; instead of condemning her mother. “*Blessed are the peace makers,*” you know. But the way to make peace between contending parties, is not by intirely siding with those who tell us their grievances; but by striving to reconcile them to their adversaries, by representing their *actions*, and interpreting their *words* in the most *favorable* manner they will admit. I doubt not, my dear, but when you come to reflect on these things, you will agree to the justice of what I say, and on any other occasion that may present itself, endeavour to do as I have advised. I have, according to my usual method, run this letter to a prodigious length; but when once I begin to converse with my beloved girl, I know not when to leave off, especially as she tells me she finds pleasure and advantage from my letters. But lest I should quite tire your patience, I will hasten to conclude, and subscribe myself as ever,

Your most affectionate Aunt,

MARTHA BARTLATE.

 L E T T E R XLVII.

Mrs. BARTLATE to Miss SEAMORE.

IF I thought my *Harriot* had sufficiently recovered the fatigue of reading my last unmerciful long letter, I would begin another, as I did not in that speak to all those subjects which your letter led to, and which certainly required some notice, and greater marks of civility, than to be passed over in silence. And the first which through forgetfulness I omitted to observe upon, is your objection to Miss *Cross's* name. I confess I do not think it the most pleasing one I ever heard ; but as at present names are only used to distinguish one person from another, and not as formerly, expressive of their good or bad qualities ; I should not entertain a worse opinion of a person upon account of the name they might happen to be called by : and I think my *Harriot* paid no compliment to her understanding, when for a moment she could be less pleased with her play-fellow, than if her name had been any other. I once knew a lady whose name was *Vixen*, (a very disagreeable epithet for any woman to be known by) but so far was her name from being characteristic of her conduct, that I believe she took
 more

more pains with herself, than she otherwise would have done, to acquire a constant gentleness, and sweetness of manners. Would it not then have been highly absurd, as well as *unjust*, for any to be prejudiced against her, upon account of her ugly *founaing* name? I doubt not your own sense will convince you, how extremely ridiculous it is to let your opinion be biased by such trivial circumstances. There are some people in the world who suffer themselves to be so much guided by such kind of events, as often not only to judge very uncharitably of others, but also deprive themselves of much comfort and happiness they might otherwise enjoy. Of this class I reckon all those who venture instantly to pronounce, upon the first appearance of a person, how far they are deserving of esteem, and pretend from their countenance, to discern what kind of temper and disposition they are of. A very false and erroneous method indeed. Since oftentimes, under the most pleasing appearance lurks the *wilest* of hearts; whilst behind a forbidding and plain countenance, may be hid every virtue that is great and noble. This is a truth which is very difficult to persuade young people the belief of. Unexperienced in the ways of the world, they are apt to suppose every thing to be in reality what it appears. And if they behold a form adorned with smiles and beauty, they are not to be persuaded, that moroseness and

deformity are lodged within. Neither when they see a displeasing countenance, do they well know how to suppose, the *mind* can be less exceptionable than the body. But so very far is this from being the *real* case, that I am quite astonished how people who have had any experience in the world, can continue to judge in so *ridiculous* and *wrong* a manner. The reason must be, that though they encrease in *years*, yet they will not take the pains to *profit* by what they see, or endeavour to encrease in *wisdom*; and without striving to do that, though they live to the age of *Methuselah*, they will be as *ignorant* and foolish as a child. For it is not *length of life* will make a person wise, unless they endeavour to remember and profit from what they see. Neither will reading the best or most learned books, ever be of any advantage to us, without we apply them to *ourselves*, and try as much as possible, to *practice* what they recommend. You, my dear girl, I know have sense enough to follow the advice given you by your friends; but unless you did do so, what would be the use of our troubling ourselves to write, or you to read our letters; for neither *conversation*, *letters*, or *books*, can be of any service to those, who will not themselves try to remember, and grow better by them. But young as you are, I am sure you can recollect some instances, where neither names, or outward appearances give any just idea of the persons,

persons, or tempers they belong to. What now can carry a more odious sound than the name of *Cheatem*? and yet where is a better, or more *honest* man to be found than Mr. *Cheatem*, with whom you are well acquainted? or whose humanity, kindness, and goodness of temper can exceed that of Mr. *White's*? And yet, was he to be judged by his countenance alone, what could be supposed, but that he was *cross*, *surly*, and *unfriendly*. Your favorite Miss *Right* likewise, as well as my friend Mrs. *Peace*, would neither of them from their *persons*, be supposed to be so far superior to the generality of the world, as their interior qualifications do indeed render them. Neither from Miss *Twist's* beautiful and engaging appearance, could one have expected that wicked and disobedient speech she made about striking her mamma, if she was to *dare* to beat her. You might well all be astonished when you heard it. I am sure I was at the account of it. To say no parent *ought* to punish a child is surely most ridiculous, since it is the *duty* of every parent to use all lawful methods to make their children good and virtuous; and if they are of such stubborn obstinate dispositions as will not be persuaded to what is right by gentle and kind treatment, it is then highly fit and necessary that severe means should be made use of. And whatever Miss *Twist* may at present think upon the subject, in my opinion
her

her parents are much more blameable than Miss *Keptlow's*: since so far are they from correcting any errors she may be guilty of, that on the contrary, by their unjustifiable indulgence they encourage her in naughtiness. The last time I was at your grand-mamma's I went with her to Mrs. *Twiss's*, and Miss *Sophia* chose to entertain herself with drawing faces and dogs upon the paper of the room between the flowers. Her mamma several times desired her to leave off, and at last made her set down by her, which she did screaming and crying to such a degree, that we could not hear one another speak. At last her papa came in, upon which she redoubled her cries, and roared louder if possible than before. He immediately enquired into the cause of her grief, and hearing what it was, Pough! said he, is that all! what great harm would she do the paper? besides, if she spoiled it, she had better do that than make herself sick with crying, and spoil her *own pretty face*. He then gave her his own pencil, telling her at the same time not to mind what her *mamma* said, but divert herself as she pleased. She then dried up her tears, and returned to the same mischievous employment. Her mamma only smiled and said, "*Sophia* will be *spoiled*." I thought so too, but had she been my daughter, I could not so easily have suffered her to have been so. Her speech therefore which founded so dreadfully

fully disobedient, in justice demands more our *pity* than resentment; since it is not so much the poor girl's fault as her parents, for not teaching her better, and convincing her that they had a *right*, and *ought* to punish her if naughty. Again having reached the bottom of my paper, reminds me that it is high time to release my beloved girl from the tedious grave lectures of

Her affectionate Aunt,

MARTHA BARTLATE.

L E T T E R XLVIII.

Miss SEAMORE to Mrs. BARTLATE.

I WISH, my dear Ma'am, you would not say so much about tiring me with your letters; for the oftener I have them, and the longer they are, I like it so much the better; and I am sadly afraid, since you say so much about it, that sometimes you make them shorter than you need, for fear I should be tired of them, which indeed I never am, nor ever can be. I have been wondering for this long while that I have not heard from my mamma, and never recollected till this morning that I owe her a letter, which
I dare

I dare say is the reason I have not had any from her ; for she told me before I came here, that she should not have time to write to me oftener than I did to her ; but she would *make* time to answer as many letters as I should send her. I am so sorry I have made this mistake, for she will think I have quite forgot her, and don't want to hear from her, and now I have no time to send, as I am to go home the day after to-morrow. I am going out presently with my grand-mamma to dine at a Mrs. *Pope's* ; but I must just tell you first, that I have seen Miss *Keptlowes* again ; and their mamma *was* very angry about the frock, but she did not punish her any other way, than by making her sit still, and go without her dinner till she had mended it ; which was not till past five in the afternoon, and she began it when first she went to work in the morning. I *do* think Mrs. *Keptlow* must be a very cross unreasonable woman ; but I will *not* tell her daughters so again. I am sure I am much obliged to you for your kind advice about that, as well as every thing else, and about Miss *Cross's* name. What you say is certainly true, and *names* and *faces* can have no effect upon the tempers of people ; it is very silly therefore to think about them : indeed I don't think my own papa looks very handsome, or good-humoured ; his forehead always seems to frown a little, and his lips don't look

look smiling, but I am sure he is very good-natured, and always kind and obliging to every body, as well as to his children; my grand-mamma said yesterday, he was one of the best men she ever knew; so to be sure it is very wrong to judge of people by their faces, and still more so by their names. I wonder whether, when I am a woman, I shall ever have any thoughts so strong of my own, as not to change them, when you or my mamma tell me I had better; for I am sure at present, let my opinion be what it will in my own head, the moment you say any thing against it, I quite change it, and think just as you do: and I like to do so, because then I know I am right; for I don't believe you ever do any thing wrong. But I hear my grand-mamma calling for me, and it would be *wrong* not to go, so I must conclude myself,

Your most dutiful Niece,

HARRIOT SEAMORE,

DIALOGUE

D I A L O G U E X.

MAMMA, HARRIOT, and BETSEY.

BETSEY.

YOU say, *Harriot*, you are glad you are come home, why I thought you liked being at my grand-mamma's?

HARRIOT. So I did very much; but for all that I am glad to see you, and my papa, and mamma, and *Tom* again.

BETSEY. I am sure it was a shameful thing of you not to write to us oftener. You know I am going to stay with my aunt soon, and then I won't write to you: but let you wonder, as I have done, what you were doing, and where you were going; and then you will see how you like to be served so.

MAMMA. Indeed *Harriot* has used us both shamefully, as you say; but if you did not like it, my dear, you should not for that reason serve her the same, that will not be kind: we should never, because we have been uneasy ourselves, wish to place others in the same state of suffering; such retaliation, though in the smallest instances, is very far from right, it discovers an unpleasing disposition,

disposition, and such as I should be very sorry for either of my girls to possess. If others have been guilty of an error towards us, we should endeavour to convince them of it by a difference in our behaviour, and by letting them see, how far superior our conduct is to theirs. And a generous mind (such as I am sure *Betsy* is your sister's) will be much sooner moved by such treatment, than by the methods you are proposing. But in the present instance, you know *Harriot* has already apologized for her omission, and likewise told you how much her time was taken up with your grand-mamma, I don't think therefore, my love, it was quite good-natured of you to speak in that manner to her.

BETSEY. Well! I wont say so any more, Ma'am, I will write to you *Harriot*; but now you are at home I am sure you will have time to answer all my letters; and I like answers *vastly*. But now do tell us some more about Master *Shepherds*, and Miss *Bentlys*, and Miss *Twists*, and Miss I don't know who's. You was going before breakfast to tell us something about Miss *Pope*; do pray begin again and tell us now.

HARRIOT. I was going tell you, that I don't think that Miss *Pope*, or her brother either, have much sense; but I want to hear what my mamma thinks about it.

M

MAMMA.

MAMMA. Pray, my dear, let us hear what they said or did that you thought so foolish.

HARRIOT. I will tell you, Ma'am. After tea we went to play by ourselves, and very merry we were, till we heard a noise of mice or rats behind the wainscot. I did not take any notice of them, till Miss *Pope* stopt short in the middle of her play, and asked me if I heard them? I said yes, and told her to go on with what she was about (which was crying forfeits;) but she said she was so frightened she could play no more. I said, I was sure it was only mice that made the noise, and begged her to go on. She then said, she was sure it was *rats* and not mice. Well (said I) and if it is *rats*, do you think they will eat you? No, she replied, I don't think they will eat me, but it is very unlucky to hear them, it is a sign somebody will be sick or die. I then laughed at her for thinking, that because the *rats* made a noise, any body would be sick or die. But she and her brother both said they were sure of it, for it was very unlucky, and her mamma always said so too; and they all took notice, that the night before their little brother *Sam* died, the rats made a very great noise. And another time they heard them, in two days time their aunt was dead; and at another time she herself had a very bad cold afterwards: and a great many things besides had happened

happened to *convince* them that they were certainly very unlucky creatures. So I said I could not understand how their making a noise could do any harm, neither did I believe it did. She then said, she thought I was very wicked not to believe what was so certain. She would not play any more afterwards, and we soon returned to the company.

MAMMA. I don't wonder, my dear, you should conclude they have not much sense, for I am sure I have but a bad opinion of your's, if you could suppose they had; and if their mother is of the same ridiculous opinion, I think she may with great justice be added to the number.

HARRIOT. What then! you don't believe there is any thing in it, Ma'am? I did not think you would.

MAMMA. Believe there is any thing *unlucky* in rats making a noise! I should be sorry indeed, if I did; and should think myself both *very foolish* and *very wicked*. For in the first place, are they not little lively nimble creatures, that are continually running about from one room and place to another? and how is it possible they should move quick behind the wainscot, and throw down little pieces of mortar (as they do with their feet) from the wall and not make a noise? They frequently also make a great noise with their teeth, trying to gnaw their way through

from one place to another, and in this respect I do think them *unlucky*, as they do great damage to a house, and eat up the *cheese* and *butter*, and whatever else they can find. But to think, because we happen to hear them when they move, any body will be *sick* and *die* is the most absurd arguing that can be. For whether Miss *Pope* hears them or not, (if the house has rats in it) she may depend upon it they move and run about every day and night of their lives, and therefore by that rule, some of the family would be sick and die every day. I do not say her brother might not die the day after she heard them, but she may be *very sure* the *rats* had nothing to do with his death, and he would have died just the same, though the rats had been perfectly quiet, or the family slept sound and not heard them. I should like to know how far their influence extends; for she not only thinks they are unlucky to those persons who live in the *same* house with them, but to people at a *distance*; as her aunt's death, which they did not hear of till *two* days after the rats had made a noise, she equally attributes to them.

HARRIOT. No, Ma'am, she don't attribute her aunt's or brother's death to them: she don't think the rats *killed* them; only their making a noise is a sign, she says, that somebody *is going* to die.

MAMMA,

MAMMA. Does she believe that God (by whose appointment people are both born and die) makes use of such *vermin* as rats by way of prophets to foretell his will? And if he thought proper to declare when a person should die, would he (can she suppose) not employ some more noble and intelligent method than *rats* making a noise as they run about, or play behind the wainscot? Whoever can believe such ridiculous nonsense plainly, prove that they have never given themselves the trouble to consult either reason or scripture: for if they would but ask their reason, they could never suppose that the Lord Almighty, who has all things and all men at his command, would let *rats*, which can neither speak or understand, be the messengers of his divine will. And if he thought it necessary to give notice of a person's approaching death, is it *likely* that he should do it in such a manner as to leave it uncertain *who* it is that shall die? or whether it is only a cold or a cough that somebody in the house shall have? Do you think, my dears, that it seems consistent with a God of infinite wisdom to act after this manner?

HARRIOT. No, Ma'am, I cannot say I do. I did not think when Miss and Master *Pope* said so, that it could be true.

MAMMA. I hope you did not, my love; I should be sorry if you believe such things so

contrary to all sense and reason, because a little silly child told you so.

BETSEY. But Mrs. *Pope* believes it too, *Harriot* says.

MAMMA. Then Mrs. *Pope* must be most dreadfully ignorant indeed; and I fear she has either not read, or else not attended to what the Bible teaches, otherwise she would have learned that it is very *wicked* to believe such sort of things.

BETSEY. Does the Bible say we must not mind the noise of rats?

MAMMA. The Bible does not directly say those words, but it strictly commands us not to go to *Witches* or *Wizards* (people who pretend to foretell what is to happen) or believe any thing they say. And if we are not to credit any body when they pretend to know those things which God has not thought proper to reveal, much less are we to think that rats and such kind of animals are endowed by God, with the power of disclosing hidden events. Had Mrs. *Pope* attended to the scriptures, she would have found, that since the days of our Saviour, and his immediate Apostles, the spirit of *prophecy* has totally ceased. And can she suppose that God would withdraw it from men, and confer it on *beasts* and *reptiles*? Or if he did chuse to make them his ministers, would he let them deliver their message in such an *obscure unintelligible* manner, that no one shall be
able

able to know what they meant at the time of hearing them; but be obliged to wait till the event cleared up what they were sent for? No, my dears, believe me, our God is too wise and merciful to act after so absurd a manner. He does not wish to see his creatures unhappy; and if ever he suffers them to be so, it is to promote some wise and good end. But no good end could it possibly promote, to terrify them with the apprehension of some approaching evil, without either letting them know *what* that evil was to be, or how they might escape it. The Almighty, my loves, you may assure yourselves, acts not in vain. And supposing (what is *highly ridiculous* to suppose) that rats *did* make a noise before any thing unfortunate happened, yet what would be the *use* of that, unless they told you how to prevent it? Can it be supposed that God does appoint such things, for no end but to make people miserable with the apprehension of some evil going to befall them? Or if he does *not* appoint them, can *rats* by their own wisdom foresee and foretell *death, sickness, and misfortunes*?

HARRIOT. I am glad I have mentioned this affair of Miss *Rope* to you *Ma'am*, for though I did not believe it before, still what you have said will make me more certain for the future that such things are only nonsense.

BETSEY.

BETSEY. I remember once *Peggy* said she did not like to see bats fly close to the windows, for they were unlucky; did she mean the same as rats are: do they make any noise?

MAMMA. I don't know that they make any noise, but some people think their flying by a house is as bad, as other foolish people do the noise of rats: and the hooting of owls, and the sound of cuckows have by others been thought equally dreadful. But the folly and absurdity is just the same, whether it is a *rat*, a *bat*, an *owl*, a *cuckow*, or any other *beast*, *bird*, or *reptile*, we suppose to be an omen of either good or evil. Giving heed to such kind of things is called *superstition*, and in my opinion is a kind of idolatry, as it is supposing them to be possessed of a degree of wisdom and knowledge belonging only to God. *Peggy*, perhaps, may not be so much to blame as some people are upon this account: for as she cannot read, consequently has never been able to study the scriptures: and her father and mother, as ignorant as herself, might themselves believe and teach her to do the same; that bats flying by the windows is a sign of some misfortune; without considering, that it is the nature of them to fly backwards and forwards near where they have built nests, which is generally about old houses, and other buildings. Those people therefore who live near them, could never be free from trouble, if
their

their flying by them was a proof they were to have it. Never therefore, my dear girls, for a single moment suffer yourselves to be alarmed by any such kind of superstitious nonsense; and if ever you meet any body weak enough to pay any regard to it, you may safely conclude, that they must either be defective in *sense* and *understanding*; or else very *illiterate*, and shamefully unacquainted with the word of God. Had they attended to that as they ought to do, they would have learned, that the Almighty never makes use of such means to publish his will; but if at any time he wanted to acquaint a person (any other way than by sickness) of their approaching death, he did not do it by *birds*, *rats*, or *unintelligible sounds* and *noises*, but sent a *clear* open message to them by one of his prophets, saying, "Thou shalt *die* and not live." And throughout the whole scriptures we shall never find any other kind of warning given them. The scriptures, my dears, are written for our example and our learning; and if we forsake them, and chuse to follow the follies of our own fancies, and be guided by *rats* and *birds*, we prove ourselves unworthy of the care God hath shewn of us, and must expect to be punished for such *sin*.

End of the SECOND VOLUME;





